THE LIFE OF ST. CLARE



Saint Clare
By Tiberio d'Assisi
at S. Maria degli Angeli d'Assisi

The Life of Saint Clare
ascribed to Fr. Thomas of Celano of the Order of Friars Minor [A.D. 1255-1261] translated and edited from the earliest MSS. by Fr. Paschal Robinson, of the same Order: with an Appendix containing the Rule of Saint Clare

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FOREWORD

IT IS SAID that devoted women have been the complement of almost all the men who have notably affected religion. However this may be, the story of St. Clare is linked so very closely with that of St. Francis in popular sentiment and imagination that it seems difficult to think of the one Saint apart from the other. What is certain is that the gentle influence of the Assisian Abbess played no small part in fashioning the life and forwarding the work of the Umbrian *Poverello*. Not only was St. Clare "the chief rival of the Blessed Francis in the observance of Gospel Perfection," as an early chronicler styles her;[1] she was also his chief ally in bringing about that great religious movement which told so wonderfully upon the spiritual life of the West and upon the history of the thirteenth century. No one else, indeed, appears to have caught the spirit of St. Francis so completely as St. Clare—that exquisite

Franciscan spirit, as it is called, which is so tender and yet so strong, so human and yet so other-worldly—and in that spirit she threw around poverty an ineffable charm, such as women alone can impart to religious or civic heroism. After St. Francis was gone, Clare proved herself the faithful heiress of his ideals; and when those ideals were in danger of demolition, because some of his disciples would fain have tempered their master's teachings by the dictates of worldly wisdom, it was she who struggled to uphold them beyond all the rest. That struggle lasted more than a quarter of a century: it ended only with her life.[2] But the victory lay with Clare, whose steadfast striving after an ideal through good report and evil report, no less than her engaging example of "the praying spirit that worked as it prayed," did much to guide the women of her day toward higher aims.

St. Clare used to call herself the "little flower of St. Francis,"[3] and St. Bonaventure tells us that she shed around her the fragrance of springtide.[4] Something of that fragrance still clings to the story of her life and lends it a special charm. It is truly one of those lives that can teach perfection without sacrificing poetry. And, in so far as it may be allowable to associate the idea of romance with such a subject, the friendship of St. Francis and St. Clare forms one of the most romantic chapters in

the Lives of the Saints. For more than one reason, then, the story of St. Clare opens up a page of medieval biography full of import and pathetic interest even for those who are not especially students of the Franciscan Legend.

This little book does not, of course, pretend to be more than a mere footnote on that page. It aims at affording English readers an opportunity of going behind the various later lives of St. Clare to the contemporary biography of the Saint written down in the far-off thirteenth century on the very morrow of her death, and which is more surely her *vera effigies* than any modern work can ever be. This primitive biography has hitherto been inaccessible to English-speaking readers in its entirety or as a separate work. A special call seems to exist for an English version of it, if only to complete the cycle of the early Franciscan Legends in the vernacular.[5] Even for its intrinsic merit this work is well worthy of being done into English, and the lack of any life of St. Clare in our language may tend to invest such a translation with an interest it might not otherwise possess. Having waited patiently, but vainly, for some one better fitted than myself to supply this translation, I have finally, with whatever misgivings as to my ability, essayed the task myself. The present modest volume is the result.

The version of Clare's life that is here presented in an English dress is translated directly from the Assisi MS. 338, the divisions into chapters and their headings being taken from this codex, which contains the oldest copy of the Latin text of our Life known to scholars. This text I have collated with other early manuscripts herein mentioned. I have departed from the Assisi text in a few rare instances only, where it did not bring out the meaning clearly; in these cases I have followed what seemed to be the more apt reading; but I have not thought it necessary in a work of this kind to note these variants, the more so since they are neither numerous nor important. The translation of the text has been supplemented by such notes as may enable the reader to get the utmost out of it. To avoid unnecessary intrusion between the author and the reader, it has been thought better to give these notes in one place at the end of the volume. The references, however, to the Biblical quotations and allusions in which our Life, according to the thirteenth-century custom, abounds, are given in footnotes on the pages where they occur. In translating these Scriptural passages I have adhered to the Douai Version, which more closely represents the Vulgate which Celano used. It is clear, I think, that such an author must needs lose much even in the best translation. Only those who have read the original

Latin know to what heights of eloquence and beauty his language could attain. His curious preciseness, his fondness for antitheses, alliteration and *jeux de mots* are a troublesome feature of Celano's style when one comes to translate him. Indeed, it is at times impossible to put his language into ours, except by a paraphrase. My aim throughout has been to give as faithful a rendering of the Latin as may be consistent with good English. That I have fallen short of this aim and failed to do justice to the original is only too palpable. But, at least, I have taken no liberty with Celano's text, and I cherish the humble hope that this little book, in spite of its shortcomings, may do something toward making English readers better acquainted with the life of St. Clare.

It may be urged that a large part of the work which follows has direct reference to a manner of life very different from that which most of us are leading, and that there is much in it that is inapplicable to us. Be it so. Yet, who shall say there is, in the main and deepest things, no meaning for a generation like ours in the story of St. Clare? A character at once so uplifted and so chastened as hers can never lose its charm. And after all these centuries the record of such a life, which the style of a past age brings out so much better than our modern psychical methods of analysis, is able

to attract those who have any sympathy that might be called religious for what is good and beautiful and true in a way which no mere ascetical argumentation can ever do.

It happens to be my good fortune to be writing these lines within the garden at S. Damiano, amid the self-same scenes on which St. Clare's eyes so often rested. Fortunately, the "restoration" fiend has withheld his sacrilegious hand from this, the cradle of her Order, and the sweet spirit of the Seraphic Mother seems to be still brooding over the small gray building among the tangled olive-trees, with the pomegranates flowering against its walls. What wistful memories pervade this tranquil, saint-infected cloister! It is here that St. Clare learned the counsel of perfection from St. Francis and passed it on to her spiritual daughters. It was from S. Damiano that many of these daughters went bravely forth to transplant her life and spirit to the distant, less-favored lands of the north. It was at S. Damiano that Francis, during his last visit to St. Clare, composed his "Canticle of the Sun." It was to this same S. Damiano that his lifeless body was conveyed, that Saint Clare and her Sisters might kiss the pierced hands and feet of him who had formed them to the love of Christ Crucified. It was to S. Damiano, also, that Thomas of Celano came, after Clare herself had gone, to gather ma-

terials for that Life of the Saint which is here translated into English.

Let this be the place to express my sincere thanks to all those who have helped me in the making of this little volume. In particular, I am beholden to Professor Leto Alessandri, Curator of the Communal Library at Assisi, for the facilities he afforded me of consulting and copying the medieval MS. from which the present translation is made. I owe many thanks also to Professor Francesco Pennacchi, of Assisi, for courteously placing the proof-sheets of his forthcoming Latin edition of this same work at my disposal; and to Father Niccolò Cavanna, of S. Maria degli Angeli, for the assistance renderd me in taking some of the photographs here reproduced. For the loan of books and MSS. belonging to religious houses of the Order, and for other like kindnesses, I am indebted to the Abbess of the Poor Clares at Lyons, to Fathers Stephen Donovan, Bernardine Ibald and Livarius Oliger, of the Friars Minor, and to Mr. John A. Tennant. It gives me great pleasure to record here the perfect freedom with which I was permitted to make use of the Library of the Società Internazionale di Studi Francescani at Assisi; for this favor my warmest thanks are due to Count Fiumi Roncalli and the other officials of the Society.

Assisi, 30 *July*, 1909.

INTRODUCTION

THE temper of our time, which is nothing if not critical, demands as the credentials of a translation like the present one some such account of the work done into English as may set it in its proper perspective, literary and historical. And this demand has to be met, even at the risk of boring those to whom all details about dates and manuscripts and editions, and the like, prove caviare, indeed. Such persons are in no wise constrained to peruse this Introduction, which is intended for the other kind of reader; let them, rather, pass on to the Life of St. Clare itself without more ado.

Premising this, it is worth our while to note that, notwithstanding the widespread interest in the early Franciscan movement which has been such a marked feature of recent literature, little, comparatively speaking, has been written of late years about St. Clare and the beginnings of her Order. The reason of this is not far to seek. Easy as it is to grasp the main lines of her life-story, a detailed study of it is beset with no small difficulty. The foremost difficulty arises from the dearth of material at the

disposal of students. In other words, there are very few documents extant bearing on the subject that can be relied upon. Indeed, it may be said that the sources of our knowledge as to St. Clare are scanty in proportion as they are abundant in the case of St. Francis. This discrepancy, be it ever so regrettable, is not altogether surprising. It is not so much that the life of St. Clare was overshadowed by that of St. Francis, as a recent writer has contended,[6] as that it was in a great measure a hidden one. There is no good reason to believe that she ever once stepped beyond the threshold of S. Damiano from the time of her instalment there in or about 1212 up to her death some forty-one years afterward.[7] With St. Francis it was far otherwise. He lived almost continually, so to say, in the public eye, closely followed in all his journeyings by observant chroniclers. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at if contemporary writers have left us such a complete record of the doings and sayings of the *Poverello*, and such a meager account of St. Clare. So far as concerns outward events there was probably little to relate in her regard.

On the other hand, it is well known that not all the early documents relating to the history of St. Clare have come down to us. For example, only a fragment of the rule of life which St. Francis gave to Clare at the be-

ginning of her religious life is known to exist, and of the "many writings" which the Seraphic Father addressed to his spiritual daughters,[8] not more than a few lines have survived.[9] The Canticles he composed for the Sisters of St. Clare and the last blessing he sent them in writing[10] and other manuscripts of equal importance for the life of St. Clare have likewise perished, or at least disappeared.[11]

But how, it may be asked, did the Poor Clares ever suffer documents such as these to pass out of their hands? This question calls for a brief digression. It is a matter of history that the Chapter General of the Friars Minor, assembled at Paris in 1266, ordered that the "Ancient Legend"[12] should no longer be read and should to the utmost of the power of all the Friars be destroyed.[13] There has been some difference of opinion as to the precise aim of this ordination.[14] There can, unfortunately, be no doubt as to its effects: it resulted in a desperate war being waged upon all the early Franciscan documents, especially those which were known to relate to St. Francis's will as to the observance of Poverty.

It was, doubtless, about this time that Brother Leo, as we learn from Ubertino da Casale, confided his famous *rotuli* and *ceduli* for safe keeping to the care of the nuns in the Monastery of S. Chiara

at Assisi, in order to save them to posterity.[15] Ubertino tells us, however, that "to his great grief" these manuscripts of Leo had been "partly scattered" and "perhaps lost, at least many of them." [16] And this fact seems to furnish a valuable clue to the disappearance of some, at least, of the Clares' documents, also. For, relating as these documents did in part to the question of Poverty, they would have been no less exposed than Leo's *scripta* to the attempts of the abettors of laxity. Apart from this consideration, if we take into account the vicissitudes through which the Monastery of S. Chiara at Assisi—not to mention other less fortunate foundations—has passed during the six and a half centuries of its existence, the wonder is, rather, that the nuns there have succeeded in saving any of their early documents at all. Only those who have been privileged to read a touching MS. chronicle of *Memorie* preserved in the archive and written at different periods by religious who had witnessed what they record, can form any idea of what the community at S. Chiara had to suffer in consequence of oft-recurring wars and revolutions. More than once within the last hundred years the religious have been suddenly expelled without being allowed to take anything with them, whilst their monastery was pillaged and turned over to the soldiers as a barracks, or the cells were let out as

lodgings. Who can tell how many a precious volume and manuscript may have perished in this way? In any event it seems safe to say that the Clares at Assisi are in nowise accountable for the loss of their early documents bearing on the life of St. Clare and the history of their Order. Throughout the history of the Monastery of S. Chiara its archive has been guarded with jealous care,[17] and when no other means of saving these treasures remained, the nuns hid them not less wisely than well. Witness the pious ruse by which the original Bull of Innocent IV confirming the Rule of St. Clare was preserved. This precious document, which for centuries was thought to have been lost, was found by the Abbess in the spring of 1893 at the Monastery of S. Chiara wrapped inside an old habit of the Saint!

The belated recovery of this important Bull awakened considerable interest not only for its own sake, but also because it led to the hope that some other missing documents of the early times might also be hidden at S. Chiara, awaiting, as it were, to be discovered. That such is not the case may now be positively affirmed. In January of 1908 the present writer, having obtained the necessary leave to enter within the *clausura* at S. Chiara, made a minute and protracted examination of the archive there and of every other nook and crevice on the premises likely to conceal aught of interest,

sounding the very walls, lest perchance—as not infrequently happens in old monasteries—some hidden treasure might be secreted behind them.[18] The Breviary of St. Francis, which his companions Leo and Angelo committed to the nuns at S. Chiara for safe keeping, besides many other interesting relics of the two Saints,[19] is still there,[20] but in vain I looked for any trace of the MSS. which Leo confided to their care or of any of the other much-desired early documents bearing upon the history of St. Clare. Of a truth, I was hardly so sanguine as to expect to find them. Indeed, it was not so much by the hope of finding the documents in question that I was led to make the search at S. Chiara as by the desire of setting at rest once for all the mooted question as to the probability of some, at least, of the missing documents being hidden in that monastery. So far as concerns S. Chiara, it boots not to look further. My quest of documents there also served to disclose the existence of many interesting early Bulls and other "pergamene," some of them yet unpublished.[21] It may be added that, thanks to the courtesy of Mgr. Tini, Vicar General of Assisi, I was able to make sure that no early MSS. regarding St. Clare lie lurking in any cobwebbed corner of the archive of S. Rufino, either. The chief object of my search at the latter place was an instrument, executed on 8 June, 1238,

by St. Clare and the fifty Sisters who were then with her at S. Damiano, by which they appointed a procurator to make over a piece of land near Bastia to the Chapter of S. Rufino. When Wadding wrote,[22] the original document was in the possession of the Dean of the Cathedral of S. Rufino at Assisi, D. Cillenio Benignotoli, but the waters of Lethe had apparently closed over this precious parchment before 1795. At least there is no mention of it in the very complete Inventory of the archive of S. Rufino (963-1646), made in that year by Frondini. This Inventory,[23] which is still in MS., was kindly placed at my disposal by Mgr. Tini. Nor is there any trace at S. Damiano of the early copy which Wadding saw there.

In the hope that some clue to the documents collected by the Bishop of Spoleto with a view to Clare's canonization might, perhaps, be found in the episcopal archives there, I visited that ancient city in January of 1908, but on being informed by the Vicar General, Mgr. Faloci-Pulignani—who is also Editor of the *Miscellanea Francescana*—that there were no documents there of any kind earlier than the Council of Trent (1546), I reluctantly abandoned the search.

Although the ceaseless search for Franciscan documents which has been pursued so eagerly for several years past has not as yet tended to

throw any new light upon the life of St. Clare, it is still quite possible that it may lead to the re-discovery of some fresh material bearing on the subject. In the meantime the extant documents from which our knowledge of St. Clare is chiefly derived are few and easily classified. They comprise (1) some fragments of the Saint's correspondence;[24] (2) a Testament attributed to her;[25] (3) some early Bulls bearing on her life,[26] and (4) a contemporary biography.[27] If we except such occasional references to St. Clare as occur in the early lives of St. Francis, these are the only sources, properly so called, of her history that have escaped the ravages of time. This is no place in which to discuss the critical questions connected with these sources.[28] Succinctly stated, one finds nothing or next to nothing in St. Clare's letters to the princess Agnes which throws any light upon her life. On the other hand, allusions to her vocation and the beginnings of her Order are not wanting in the Testament which has come down to us under her name. It is only fair to add that the authenticity of this document has been called into question. All that can be said on the subject is that it may well be the handiwork of the Saint. It is no easy task to thread one's way through the early Bulls touching the life of St. Clare that are scattered through the first two tomes of the Franciscan Bullary, and it requires a patient

spirit of research into dry details to disentangle the complicated early history of her Rule which these documents unfold. The groundwork of our knowledge of St. Clare is derived from her contemporary biography, which remains the chief source of her history. This is the work of which a translation is here presented to English readers, and of which it now becomes necessary to treat more at large.

DATE AND AUTHORSHIP

First, of all, then, as to its date. It is evident from the Introductory Letter prefaced to it that this Life was written during the lifetime of the Pope who canonized St. Clare. Now, St. Clare was inscribed in the calendar of Saints by Alexander IV on 11 August, 1255;[29] and this Pontiff died on 25 May, 1261. We may, therefore, conclude that our Life was composed between these two dates, or within eight years at most, after the death of the Saint. St. Clare was fortunate, at least, in finding a contemporary biographer. But who was this biographer? To this question a direct answer can hardly be given. Let us see why.

With a modesty becoming a follower of St. Francis, this writer elected to withhold his name. At an early stage of its history his biography passed into what has been called the *mare magnum* of Franciscan anonymity, and

lost its identity. By and by S. Bonaventure came to be accredited with its paternity. It is not hard to see how this came to pass. Our Life appeared anonymously at a time when the Seraphic Doctor was one of the most popular and widely known writers in the Order; and in tone of thought it strongly resembled some of his own works. Moreover, some early manuscripts and even editions of this Life of St. Clare actually appeared under his name. For all that, the Bollandists discredited the ascription of our Life to St. Bonaventure.[30] They were right. It certainly never emanated from his gifted and prolific pen. Following the ancient manuscript tradition of the Order, the Bollandists regarded our Life as the work of an unknown author. The *Patres Editores* of Quaracchi advanced a step further. In excluding the claims of St. Bonaventure they fixed upon Thomas of Celano as the anonymous author,[31] and most scholars have since come to the same conclusion.[32] It is none the less true, as Goetz reminds us,[33] that this contemporary biography of St. Clare may not be ascribed to Thomas of Celano with absolute certainty. So true is this that one single, undoubted early authority attributing it to some one else might suffice to put the Celanese historian's claims out of court. But no such evidence appears to be forthcoming. Meanwhile, unless all the seasoned scholars in this

domain have conspired together to be wrong, there is much greater reason for assigning our Life to Thomas of Celano than to anybody else. It seems desirable, therefore, to say a word as to the personality of this writer.

Thomas was a native of Celano in the Abruzzi, and probably entered the Order about 1215. We learn from Jordan's Chronicle[34] that in 1221 he accompanied Caesar of Speyer to Germany. The following year he became Custos of Mayence, Worms, Speyer and Cologne. When Thomas turned to Italy is uncertain, but he was at Assisi for the canonization of St. Francis (16 July, 1228), and soon afterward (before February, 1229) he wrote his *Vita Prima*, or "First Life" of St. Francis, by order of Gregory IX. Between 1244 and 1247 he compiled his *Vita Secunda* or "Second Life" of St. Francis, which is in the nature of a supplement to the first one, by commission of Crescentius of Jesi, then Minister General of the Order. About ten years later he composed a *Tractatus* or treatise on the miracles of St. Francis at the bidding of the Blessed John of Parma, the successor of Crescentius as Minister General.[35] In addition to these works, around which a large controversial literature has grown up in recent years,[36] Thomas of Celano wrote two beautiful sequences on St. Francis,[37] and he is also the reputed author

of the *Dies Irae.*[38] He had come, therefore, to be regarded in some sense as the official biographer of St. Francis, and in the natural order of things would most probably have been the person chosen to write the authoritative life of St. Clare.

That Thomas of Celano was selected for this task we learn from an amplified Italian version of the present Life which exists in manuscript in the National Library in Florence.[39] This Magliabechian codex, as it is called, possesses a special interest as containing the most definite indication yet known as to the authorship of our Life of St. Clare. In a prologue, which is found only in this Italian version and which was edited in 1895 by Dom Cozza-Luzzi,[40] Thomas of Celano is said to have been commissioned by Alexander IV to write it, and this attribution is confirmed in a prefatory letter accompanying this Italian translation. Long before Cozza-Luzzi gave it to the world, the great Conventual critic Papini called attention to this Magliabechian codex,[41] and he was inclined on the strength of it to ascribe our life to Thomas of Celano, but he afterwards changed his mind on this point,[42] although he does not say why.

The fact that Dom Cozza-Luzzi passed over in silence the date of the codex in question led me to examine it carefully during a visit to Florence in August, 1909. It is a small

parchment volume in quarto, without any date; the name of the scribe is not indicated; but the writing is undoubtedly by a seventeenth century hand;[43] and it is under that century that the Magliabechian MS. is entered in the catalogue. And what is the consequence? This. Unless the codex be a copy of a much older one, its ascription of our Life to Thomas of Celano will not bear all the weight some writers would fain put upon it. It may well be that it is a transcript of an earlier MS.—and the details it furnishes as to the preliminary steps taken by "Messer" Bartholomew, Bishop of Spoleto, with a view to St. Clare's canonization lend strength to this supposition—but the fact that this Italian version of our Life embodies "other notable things," as the translator calls them,[44] "taken from the chronicles of the Order," including (pp. 113a, 119b) the Testament and (pp. 120a, 121a) the Blessing attributed to St. Clare—which are not found in any of the early MSS., and the authenticity of which has been called into question on other grounds, also—inclines me to believe that such is not the case. To be sure, I speak as one less wise and with all due respect to those students of Franciscan sources who do not hesitate to see in this MS. one of the most interesting documents for the critical reconstruction of the history of St. Clare."[45]

Happily, however, the question of the authorship of our present Life of St. Clare does not depend upon the Magliabecchian codex. Other adequate arguments are not wanting to support Celano's claims. Indeed, if we examine the Life itself, we shall find many internal proofs in favor of the Celanese biographer. The Prologue, in particular, reveals the method and style of Thomas of Celano. It sets forth the author's motives for writing, the sources of his information, and his misgivings as to his ability to perform the task imposed upon him, in a manner which bears a strong family likeness to the prologue of Thomas of Celano's "First Life" of St. Francis—as a comparison of the two works suffices to show. Again, if we place these two lives side by side, we shall find a number of interesting parallels, containing not only the same similarity of thought, but also the same peculiarities of diction—that fondness for epigram and alliteration and that tendency to play upon words which surely spell the name of Thomas of Celano. It would not be difficult to select illustrations, but they would be out of place in a translation. Those whom the question interests are referred to the list given by P. Edouard d'Alençon.[46] And what is perhaps more striking still, our author here employs the same sevenfold division of the subject-matter as that outlined by Thomas of Celano

in Chapter VIII in his "First Life" of St. Francis. In that chapter, after treating briefly of the Poor Clares at S. Damiano, Celano declares that their "wondrous life and glorious institution demands a work to itself and leisure to write it."[47]

Thomas found that leisure toward the end of his life, when he was spiritual director of the Poor Clares in the Monastery of S. Giovanni de Varro, near Tagliacozzo, some sixteen miles from his birthplace. It was then that he composed the "work in itself" on St. Clare which is here translated and which is believed to have been his last work.[48] Well-nigh three decades had elapsed since Thomas wrote his "First Life" of St. Francis, and this circumstance goes far to account for certain alleged inconsistencies between that Life and this one,[49] as well as to explain why it is that the present Life, though it resembles Thomas's earlier works so closely in other respects, yet lacks something of their spirited style.

Seeing that our author can hardly, in any case, have been an eyewitness of the facts he records,[50] it becomes important for us to inquire, next, whether or not he had adequate opportunities of arriving at the truth. What, in other words, were the sources of his information as to St. Clare? The author himself is at pains to enlighten us. No one, he declares in his Prologue,[51] is competent to write

about facts he has not witnessed himself, or about which he has not learned from eyewitnesses. With this proviso, he goes on to relate that, having examined the *acta* of St. Clare, he proceeded to write her Legend; but that, not being satisfied with the defective accounts he read, he had recourse to the surviving companions of St. Francis and of St. Clare to ascertain the facts. Here we may note the temper of the true chronicler, whose chief concern is to record things as they really were.

It follows, then, that the official *acta* of St. Clare's life and miracles formed the primary source of Celano's information. These same *acta* had formed the basis of the Bull of Clare's canonization [52]—a fact which may serve to explain the marked resemblance between the Bull and our Life, which the observant reader of both documents can scarcely fail to notice, for neither one of these documents can very well have been derived from the other. Besides these *acta*, Thomas of Celano had access to other early documents, which have since disappeared, and among them, if we may believe the writer of the Magliabecchian MS. already mentioned, were a primitive legend of St. Clare and some notes on her life by certain Friars.[53] Not only, therefore, had Celano every opportunity for arriving at an accurate knowledge as to her life, but he appears to have used this opportunity to the full. Not being

satisfied with the documents at his disposal, he betook himself to Assisi and laid under contribution those who had known St. Clare, then only laid to rest a few years before.[54] That our author was not himself an eyewitness of the things he relates detracts nothing, therefore, from the value of his narrative.

Such, then, were the sources of Celano's knowledge as to St. Clare. The material collected from these sources he cast into a literary form and added a preface of his own. The present Life is something more, however, than a mere compilation. In working over the material at his disposal, Thomas of Celano conferred on it in some measure the stamp of his personality, and this no less in the selection and arrangement of this material than in the shape he gave it. On the whole, his relation to our present Life of St. Clare and to the "Second Life" of St. Francis, which bears his name, seems to be somewhat analogous in so far as Thomas of Celano, in writing his Life of St. Clare, was mainly dependent for his facts upon the information supplied by others. In default, however, of the original sources to which he had access in its composition, Celano's Life of St. Clare remains the earliest attempt to give a presentment of St. Clare in writing.

Thomas of Celano's qualifications to be the first biographer of St. Clare can hardly be

gainsaid. Apart from the fact that he had come, as we have seen, to be regarded in some sort as the official biographer of the Order, he had the gift of writing in no ordinary degree. A born man of letters and the master of an elegant and eloquent Latin style, he was something more than a conventional medieval hagiologist. But he was influenced by the ideas current in the day in which his life was set, and, this being so, allowance must be made for rhetorical flights such as modern ears are little accustomed to. Thus, he begins his Life with a picture of the state of society at the close of the twelfth century, from which one might conclude that the grossest darkness then brooded over the face of Europe. That there was much moral darkness in this period no student of history will deny; but that darkness was its chief, if not only, characteristic, no student of history may assert. To be sure, most modern scholars have abandoned belief in the general darkness of the Middle Ages, but not all know how to discount the exaggerations of medieval chroniclers. It may not be amiss, therefore, to note by the way that, as a rule, the more pious a chronicler is, the blacker are the colors he uses. Aside from this consideration, Celano had a special motive for drawing his shadows so darkly. He wished to make St. Clare shine bright against the somber background of the times, and the significance

of her name, *Clara*, or clear, lent additional color to his picture. He cannot resist the temptation to ring the changes upon her clarity, her clarisonance and her clarification, and to indulge in forced antithesis in order to bring its lightsomeness into full relief. It would be unfair, however, to make a scapegoat of Celano in consequence of these excesses, for it must be remembered that such literary vices —as we would now call them—were accounted good style at the time he wrote. For the rest, it would be very short-sighted, to say the least, to quarrel with our author if we do not find in his Life of St. Clare what one would look for in a modern biography. As regards its literary structure, he used the traditional forms and concepts. Indeed, it affords in this respect an almost typical example of the medieval method. Our Life divides itself into two parts. The first of these (pp. 3-74) extends from the period immediately preceding Clare's birth up to her death, and in so far as it deals with her conversion, life and miracles may be regarded in some measure as the collected impressions of Clare's companions and acquaintances, edited by Celano. The second part (pp. 75-91), which treats of the miracles worked through Clare's intercession after her death, is obviously little more than an abridgement of the wonders recorded in the official *acta* of her canonization. Although the facts nar-

rated range over the whole life of St. Clare from her birth to her death, they do not, as a rule, follow the chronological order of events, but have been grouped under various headings according as they seem to fit in together and tend to illustrate different aspects of the Saint's life or character. Again, no attempt is made to determine the interval between the events recorded. Thus, the death of St. Agnes is stated to have taken place "a few days" after that of her sister, St. Clare. In point of fact, more than three months elapsed between the two events.[55] So, too, after relating the repulsion of Aversa, which is usually referred to the year 1234, Clare's biographer proceeds to record the rescue of St. Agnes from their enraged relatives, an incident which clearly took place in 1212. If the earlier event is here put later, it is because the context leads up to it, not in order to fix its date. So far as dates go, only one—the year of Clare's canonization (p. 91), is given throughout the earlier work. No mention is made of the year of her birth, conversion or death. We must remember, in extenuation of this seemingly lamentable negligence, that medieval hagiographers did not care if the exact dates in a Saint's life were not under the eyes of their readers, provided its vivifying influence entered their souls. In other words, their primary aim was practical, rather than

scientific. The present biography was written for the greater glory of St. Clare and for the edification of her spiritual daughters and of the world at large. It seeks to portray St. Clare as a chosen servant of God, raised up to be the co-foundress of a great religious Order, and to hold her up as a model for imitation. Such was our author's aim, and as the purely historical features of the Saint's life were not considered essential to it, he, in great measure, disregarded them.

On the other hand, whatever might tend to establish and exalt the sanctity of Clare—her watchings and fastings, her spirit of prayer and gift of tears, her ecstasies and miracles—is set forth at length. And it may be well to recall that Celano wrote at a time when the tendency to believe that God continually interfered with the course of nature ruled everywhere.[56] Our author realizes the need of reckoning with this tendency, but he is at pains to remind his readers that "true sanctity lies not so much in working miracles as in holiness and fullness of good works"[57]—a reminder that is somewhat unusual in an age that produced the *Legenda Aurea* of Voragine and the *Dialogus Miraculorum* of Cæsar of Heisterbach. To modern readers some of the miracles recorded by our author may seem to be trivial, puerile, even grotesque. Never mind. They were certainly set down in all

sincerity, and their perusal has fostered the fervor of those for whom they were chiefly intended. Considered in themselves, these narratives are not without interest, as illustrating the popular religious point of view of the Middle Ages. Take, for example, the tale of the little maid of Cannara who was rescued from the wolf,[58] which is candid as a child's story and as touching in its extreme *naïveté*. Who can read this simple tale without being impressed by the nearness to the world of spirit in which Clare's contemporaries lived, and without being reminded that the devotional attitude of mind which characterized our forefathers is far enough from us, and nothing better, perhaps, come in its stead. This by the way.

Like all the early Franciscan legends, the present Life of St. Clare is more or less fragmentary. The author himself tells us [59] that he is far from having told all. Taken as a whole, he may be said to furnish the materials for a picture of the Saint rather than the picture itself. These materials are still sufficient to enable us to form a clear outline of St. Clare's life and character. She was nurtured in an atmosphere of religion, and her childhood was one of precocious yet engaging piety. The first event of public interest in the life of Clare took place in the Lent of 1212. St. Francis was then preaching at S. Giorgio

in Assisi. Deeply moved by his words of "spirit and life," Clare felt that "the Master had come and was calling her." She gave her heart to Francis, and he, in turn, consecrated it to God. There are few more dramatic pages in any biography than that which describes the Saint's midnight flight from her father's house to an unknown future—how, having forced her way through a walled-up door, she hurried out of the slumbering town and across the intervening fields, even down to the tiny chapel of the Porziuncola in the plain below; how as she drew near to it the *Poverello* and his companions advanced to meet her, bearing flickering torches, and how Francis, having cut off her hair, clothed her with the coarse, beast-colored habit and knotted cord then worn by his Friars. Then and there the grand old Order of the Poor Clares, in whose bosom there now repose so many generations of Saints, was founded, however unconsciously, through this brave, venturesome, even reckless, act of one frail young girl. Clare was not yet eighteen when she underwent this great spiritual crisis known as her "conversion."

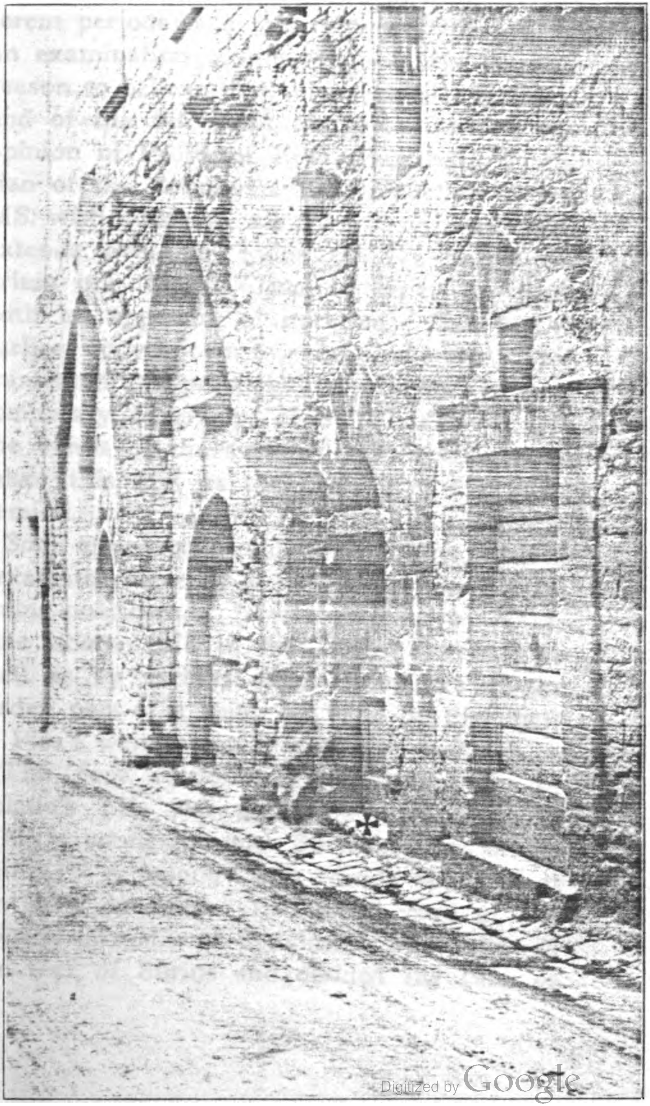
The first of the "weaker sex"—I am using Celano's words—to embrace the new mode of life marked out by the *Poverello*, Clare was destined to become the "valiant woman" of the early Franciscan movement. In some respects, perhaps, she was even more virile than

Francis himself. Witness, for example, her memorable interview with Gregory IX at S. Damiano. The venerable Pontiff, who regarded absolute poverty as impossible for cloistered women, visited Clare and urged her to accept some possessions for her community. "If it be thy vow that hindereth thee from doing so," he added, "we absolve thee from it." "Holy Father," replied the gentle Abbess, "absolve me from my sins, if thou wilt, but I desire not to be absolved from following Jesus Christ."[60] Clare's conduct on that occasion was hardly less heroic than when, single-handed, she routed the band of Saracen mercenaries who had scaled the walls of S. Damiano.[61] Nor was that the first time she had faced armed men without flinching and vanquished them.[62]

But with all her strength of will Clare had a woman's tenderness and she showed it in a woman's way.[63] Thus, we read that when the nights were cold she was wont to go through the dormitory at S. Damiano and to put warmer covering over such Sisters as seemed to be ill-protected against the rigors of winter. This tenderer side of the Saint's character is no less charmingly portrayed by her contemporary biographer than the empire she exercised over the hearts of her spiritual children. Brave and cheerful to the last, Clare, in spite of her protracted and painful infirmities,

caused herself to be propped up in bed so that she might continue to spin altar-linen for the poor churches among the Umbrian hills. And when, during an access of suffering, Cardinal Rainaldo exhorted her to patience, she replied, "Believe me, dearest brother, that ever since the day I received the grace of vocation from our Lord through His servant Francis, no suffering hath ever troubled me, no penance been too hard, no infirmity too great." Nothing, truly, is more touching in the Saint's later life than her unfaltering loyalty to the memory of Francis. On her deathbed as in the heyday of her girlish enthusiasm, Francis was, after God, the master light of all her seeing.[64] And surely it was befitting that the early companions of Francis were present when Clare lay dying, to read aloud for her the Passion of our Lord according to St. John, *in commendationem animae*, even as they had done twenty-seven years before at the Porziuncola when Francis was led away from earth by "Sister Death." Celano's account of Clare's death is moving in its simple directness, and is evidently based on the narrative of an eyewitness. It may well be that we owe it to Leo, who was a life-long friend of Clare, and who is said to have collaborated to some extent in writing her life. Only one who was present could have furnished the intimate details recorded.

Such, in brief, are some of the leading traits



but a miscellaneous collection of MSS. of different periods; and this view is confirmed by an examination of the text. There is good reason to believe that, as a whole, it is of the end of the thirteenth century. Such is the opinion of Professor Leto Alessandri, Librarian of the Commune.[70] The portion of the MS. with which we are chiefly concerned here extends over ten folios (74-84), and comprises our *Vita S. Clarae* in thirty chapters, with an appendix of miracles. This is the earliest copy known to exist of the work here translated and practically represents the contemporary biography of St. Clare as it left the hands of the author. I have, therefore, taken this text as the basis of the present version.

Soon after it appeared, our Life was put into hexameter verse by a poet whose identity remains unknown.[71] It was abridged by Voragine about 1275 in his *Golden Legend*,[72] as well as by various early chroniclers of the Order, part of it being found in Bartholomew of Pisa's well-known *Book of Conformities*.[73]

The first edition of the Latin text of Celano's Life was published at Cologne in 1573, in connexion with Surius's Lives of the Saints.[74] A second Latin edition appeared at Antwerp in 1613. It formed part of the *Historia Seraphica* of Sedulius,[75] who followed the text of Surius and divided the Life, as

Surius had done, into thirty chapters. A third Latin edition was issued in 1761 under the auspices of the Bollandists.[76] This edition was based on a MS. of their own, which they collated with two others,[77] and with the edition of Surius, the variants being carefully noted and a scholarly "Commentarius Praevius," contributed by Cuypers. The text of this edition, which is divided into seven chapters containing seventy-one paragraphs, does not differ substantially from that of Surius and Sedulius, save only that it contains two additional chapters not found in the earlier editions.[78] A fourth and much needed critical edition of the Latin text prepared by Professor Francesco Pennacchi, of Assisi, is on the point of publication as I write these lines. This new edition is based on the text of the Assisi MS. 338, already mentioned.

Another witness to the popularity of Celano's Life of St. Clare is the fact that it had been done into the vulgar tongue of several European nations long before the Latin text was put into type. In 1491, while the art of printing was as yet in its infancy, a Flemish translation was printed at Antwerp, the text of which has recently been re-edited.[79] I have not been able to learn of any early English version of our Life, unless Caxton's delightful compendium of it in the *Golden Legend* (c. 1483),[80] may deserve that

name. Indeed, the only known English version of Celano is one which appeared some years ago under the auspices of the Poor Clares, in a volume of miscellaneous matter bearing on the life of St. Clare, and which appears to be now out of print.[31] The translation of our Life which that volume contains is based on the text of the Bollandists, and, so far as it goes, it is a good one; but it is quite overshadowed by a mass of other documents of much less value and interest and its existence appears to be wholly unknown to English students of the Franciscan Legend. In any case, plenty of room remains for a new translation which seeks to furnish a complete and correct version of the original work.

The Life of St. Clare

PREFATORY LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE SUPREME PONTIFF UPON THE LEGEND OF THE HOLY VIRGIN CLARE

AS THOUGH old age were overtaking the enfeebled world with rapid strides, the eyes of its faith were growing dim, its moral gait was faltering, its strength to do manly deeds was failing; yea, more, depravity kept pace with this decrepitude. Then it was that God, the lover of men, from the depths of His compassion, raised up religious orders of a new sort, thus providing a support for faith and a standard for conduct. The modern fathers, with the men who follow them,[82] I should certainly style the lights of the world, the leaders of the march, the masters of life through whom the splendor of noonday has arisen on the earth at evening, that they that walked in darkness might see the light.* Nor was it fitting that a helper should be wanting to the weaker sex, which, caught up in the

* See Isa. 9:2.

whirlpool of passion, was drawn to sin by a not less strong inclination and impelled toward it by a much greater frailty. Wherefore, the good God set up the venerable virgin Clare and in her enkindled a most brilliant light for womankind, whom thou, most blessed Father,[83] moved by the greatness of her miracles, placing upon a candlestick that she may shine to all that are in the house,* hast enrolled in the catalogue of Saints. Thee we honor as the father of these Orders; thee we recognize as their guardian; thee we embrace as their protector; thee we reverence as their Lord, whom the general guidance of the greatest bark of all preoccupies in such a way as not to exclude a singular and anxious care for smaller craft also. It has pleased Your Holiness to enjoin upon my littleness that, having examined the acts of St. Clare,[84] I should compose her Legend,[85] a task which my want of skill in letters would surely make me shrink from, were it not for the repeated expression of Pontifical authority. Girding myself, therefore, to the behest, but fearing to rely upon the defective accounts I have read, I had recourse to the companions of the Blessed Francis[86] and to the community of the virgins of Christ,[87] often considering in my mind that of old none were allowed to write history save those who

* See Matt. 5:15.

had seen for themselves or who had received their knowledge from eyewitnesses. When these, I say, under the guidance of truth and in the fear of the Lord, had more fully instructed me, I set down in simple style some of what I had collected, and omitted much, so that while virgins will delight to read the mighty deeds of the virgin [Clare] the minds of the ignorant may not find a cause for obscurity in diffusion of words. Let men, therefore follow the new disciples of the Word made flesh; let women imitate Clare, the follower of the Mother of God, the new leader of womankind. But in so much as to thee, Most Holy Father, belongeth full authority to correct, curtail and add to these things, so is my will submissive, obedient and obsequious in all. May the Lord Jesus grant thee to fare well now and for all time. Amen.

I

HERE BEGINS THE LIFE OF THE HOLY VIRGIN CLARE—AND FIRST OF HER BIRTH

THIS wonderful woman, clear alike in name and in deed,[88] belonged to a family of no small luster of the city of Assisi. Having been first a fellow-citizen of the Blessed Francis on earth, she afterward came to reign with him on high. Her father was a knight,[89] and she was of knightly lineage on both sides; her family was wealthy and, after the manner of the country, owned extensive possessions. Her mother, Ortolana by name,[90] about to bring forth a fruitful plantlet in the garden of the Church, was herself not wanting in good fruit. For although she bore the yoke of marriage and was bound by household ties, yet she devoted as much of her time as might be to the divine service and was unremitting in works of piety. This devout woman crossed the sea with other pilgrims and, having visited those spots which the God-man hallowed by His sacred footprints, at length returned home with joy. On another occasion she went to pray at St. Michael,[91] and with still greater devotion did she visit the shrines of the

Apostles. What more need be said? By the fruit the tree is known,* and the fruit is commendable in virtue of the tree. An abundance of the divine favor preceded in the root so that a wealth of holiness might follow in the branchlet. When finally Ortolana was with child and the time of her delivery was at hand, as she prayed earnestly before the cross in a certain church, to the end that the Crucified might bring her safely through the perils of childbirth, she heard a voice saying to her: "Fear not, woman, for thou shalt in safety bring forth a light which will illumine the world more clearly." Taught by this oracle, Ortolana directed that the new-born infant, when born again in holy Baptism, be named Clare in the hope that the brightness of the promised light might in some way be verified after the good pleasure of the Divine Will.[92]

* Matt. 12: 33.

OF HER MANNER OF LIFE IN HER PATERNAL HOME

HARDLY had the little Clare seen the light than, fitly enough, she began to glisten with lightsomeness in the darkness of the world, and during her tender years she became resplendent by virtue of her conduct. First of all, she learned with a docile heart, the rudiments of faith from her mother's lips, and as the Spirit working within her at the same time formed her into a most pure vase, she became known as a vessel of grace, indeed. Clare gladly stretched out her hands to the poor,* and from the abundance of her house she supplied the wants of many.† And in order that her sacrifice might be more pleasing to God, she deprived her own little body of delicacies and, secretly sending them out by messengers, relieved the hunger of the orphans. In this wise, mercy growing up with her,‡ she showed a tender heart, commiserating the miseries of the miserable.[98] Clare loved the practice of holy prayer, and so often experienced its good

* See Prov. 31 : 20.
† See II Cor. 8 : 14.
‡ Job 31 : 18.

odor * that little by little she accustomed herself to a life of seclusion. Since she had no prayer-beads by telling which she might say her *Pater Noster*, she counted out her little orisons to God by means of a heap of pebbles.[94]

When, therefore, Clare began to feel the first goads of Divine Love, she saw that the fleeting image of worldly beauty was to be spurned and, taught by the unction of the Spirit, she valued the empty things of the world according to their worthlessness. Hidden under her soft and costly garments she wore a little hair shirt, thus dressing with the world outwardly while putting on Christ inwardly.† But when at length her family wished Clare to make a noble alliance, she in nowise acquiesced, but, feigning to postpone earthly espousals, commended her virginity to God. Such were the manifestations of Clare's virtues in her paternal home; such the first fruits of the Spirit; such the preludes of her holiness. Redolent as she was, therefore, with so great fragrance, Clare made herself known by her sweet odor, even as a vessel of aromatical spices does though it be closed. Thus, all unknown to herself, Clare began to be praised by her neighbors and, the fame of her secret acts being published, the report of her goodness was noised among the people.

* An allusion to II Cor. 2:15.

† See Rom. 13:14, and Gal. 3:27.

OF THE BLESSED FRANCIS'S ACQUAINTANCE AND FRIENDSHIP WITH HER

HEARING of the now famous name of Francis, who, like a new man,* had restored by new virtues the path of perfection forgotten in the world, Clare at once was desirous to hear and see him,[95] being moved thereto by the Father of Spirits, whose first promptings both had followed, albeit in a different manner. And he [Francis], struck by the fair fame of so favored a maiden, was not less wishful to see her and hold converse with her, for, being wholly eager for spoils and having come to depopulate the kingdom of this world, he would fain in some way snatch this noble prey from the wicked world and restore her to her God.† Francis visited Clare and she more often visited him, so ordering the times of their visits that their holy meetings might neither become known by man nor disparaged by public rumor. For, accompanied by a single confidential companion,[96] the girl, going forth from her paternal home in secret, frequently

* An allusion to Eph. 4:24.
† See Gal. 1:4.



visited the man of God: to her his words seemed a flame and his deeds more than human. Father Francis exhorted her to contempt of the world, showing her in vivid words the barrenness of earthly hopes and the deceitfulness of earthly beauty.[97] He instilled into her ears the sweet espousals of Christ, persuading her to conserve the pearl of her maidenly purity for that Blessed Spouse who out of love became Man. But why multiply words? At the entreaty of the most holy Father, who acted deftly after the manner of a most faithful bridesman, the virgin did not delay to give her consent. And forthwith a glimpse of the heavenly joys was opened up to her, the sight of which made the world itself seem of small price, the desire of which made her melt, as it were, away; the love of which made her aspire after the supernal espousals. For, glowing with celestial fire, Clare so looked down on the glory of earthly vanity that nothing of the world's applause cleaved to her affections. Dreading, moreover, the allurements of the flesh, she resolved to keep herself unspotted,* desiring to make her body a temple to God alone and striving by virtue to merit espousals with the great King. Thenceforth Clare committed herself wholly to the guidance of Francis, considering him to be, after God,

* The Latin reads, *thorum in delicto se nescituram proponit*—an allusion to Wis. 3:13.

the director of her steps. From that time her soul depended upon his holy admonitions, and she received with a ready heart whatever he said to her of the good Jesus. She was already weary of the beauty of worldly apparel and she accounted but as dung all the things the world esteems, that she might gain Christ.*

* A reference to Phil. 3:8.

HOW, BEING TURNED FROM THE WORLD BY BLESSED FRANCIS, SHE PASSED INTO RELIGION

FURTHERMORE, lest mundane dust might in the future sully the unspotted mirror of her soul, or mundane contagion corrupt Clare at such a susceptible age, the good Father hastened to lead her out of the dark world. The solemnity of Palm Sunday was drawing nigh when the girl with great fervor betook herself to the Man of God for counsel as to her retreat from the world, as to what was to be done, and how she was to do it. Father Francis ordained that on the feast day Clare, dressed out and adorned, should come to the blessing of the palms with the rest of the people: that on the night following she should go forth from the camp and that her worldly joy be turned into mourning for the Lord's Passion.* When Sunday had come, the girl, radiant in festive array among the crowd of women, entered the church with the others.

* There are two Scriptural allusions here: "*Exiens extra castra*" (Heb. 13:13); *mundanum gaudium luctum convertat in Dominicae Passionis*" (Jas. 4:9).

There a noteworthy presage occurred, for whereas the rest pressed forward to receive the branches, Clare through modesty remained in her place without moving, whereupon the Prelate, descending from the steps, came to her and put a palm in her hands.[98] The following night Clare set about the accomplishment of the Saint's command, and, with some trusty companions,[99] began her longed-for flight. But not wishing to leave by the usual door, she broke open, with a strength that astonished herself, another one which was walled up by a mass of beams and stones.[100] Thus leaving behind her, home, city and kindred, Clare hastened to St. Mary of the Porziuncola, where the Friars who were keeping vigil at the little altar with lighted torches received the virgin Clare. Immediately casting aside the sordidness of Babylon, she there gave a bill of divorce to the world,* and forsook her various ornaments, her tresses being shorn at the hands of the Friars.[101] Nor was it befitting that the Order of virginity to be raised up toward evening [102] should flower elsewhere than in the sanctuary of her who, first and most worthy of all, was alone a virgin and a mother. This is that place in which the new militia of the poor under the leadership of Francis took on its happy beginnings [103] that it might be clearly manifest that both religions

* See Deut. 24: 1.

were brought forth by the Mother of Mercies in her inn.* But after Clare had received the holy livery of Penance before the altar of the Blessed Mary, and after the humble handmaid had been espoused to Christ as if by the couch of this Virgin, St. Francis straightway led her to the Church of St. Paul, to abide in that place until the Most High should provide another.[104]

* An allusion to Luke 2:7.

HOW, MOLESTED BY HER KINSFOLK, SHE YET PERSEVERED WITH FIRMNESS

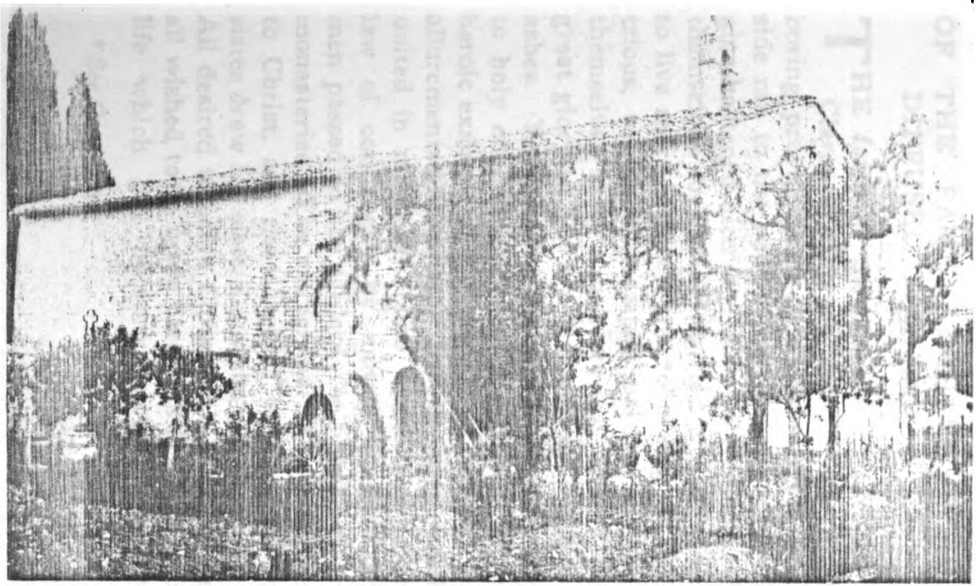
WHEN the news had reached her heart-broken kinsfolk, they condemned the deed of the girl and her proposal, and, banding together, they ran to the spot, endeavoring to attain what they could not. They resorted to main force, to baneful counsels, to bland promises, urging Clare to withdraw from such a sorry plight, which was unworthy of her birth and unheard of in those parts. But Clare, laying hold of the altar cloths and baring her tonsured head, declared that nothing would henceforth separate her from the service of Christ. Her courage increased as the war waged by her kindred waxed stronger; and love wounded by ill-treatment gave her strength. Thus, even thus, for many days together while she bore with this obstacle in the way of the Lord and while her kinsfolk set themselves against her purpose of holiness, Clare's courage failed not, neither did her fervor diminish, but between harsh words and deeds she encouraged herself to hope, until finally her kindred, withdrawing their opposi-

tion, quieted down. After a few days' interval Clare moved to the Church of S. Angelo de Panzo,[105] but as her mind was not fully at rest there, she at last, by the advice of Blessed Francis, removed to the Church of S. Damiano.[106] There fastening the anchor, as it were, of her mind for good, she concerned herself no longer about a change of abode. She did not waver because of the straitness of the place nor shrink back at its loneliness. This is that church for the repair of which St. Francis toiled so wondrously and to the priest of which he had offered money for the work of restoration. This is that church in which, while Francis was praying, a voice coming down from the wood of the cross resounded, "Francis, go repair My house, which, as thou seest, is utterly destroyed." [107] In this little place the virgin Clare shut herself up as in a prison for the love of her Heavenly Spouse. Here hiding herself from the turmoil of the world, she confined her body so long as she lived. Building a nest in the hollow places of this wall, the dove, covered with silver,* brought forth the community of the virgins of Christ, instituted a holy monastery, founded the Order of the Poor Ladies. Here in the way of penance she wore out her body; [108] here she sowed the seed of perfect justice; here by her own example

* An allusion to Cant. 2:14, and Ps. 67:14.

she pointed the way to them that were to follow. In this narrow little retreat for forty-two years Clare broke the alabaster of her body with the stripes of discipline, that the house of the Church might be filled with the fragrance of her ointments.* How gloriously she lived in this place will become clear if it be first narrated how many and how great were the number of the souls who came through her to Christ.

* An allusion to John 12: 3.



Chapel of S. Paolo near Bastia

OF THE FAME OF HER VIRTUES DIFFUSED FAR AND WIDE

THE fame of the sanctity of the virgin Clare soon spread through the neighboring provinces, so that women from every side ran to the odor of her ointments.* Virgins hastened after her example to consecrate themselves to Christ; married women strove to live more chastely; the noble and the illustrious, contemning stately palaces, built for themselves narrow cloisters and deemed it a great glory to live for Christ in sackcloth and ashes. Youths in eager crowds were incited to holy conflict and were spurred on by the heroic example of the weaker sex to spurn the allurements of the flesh. In fine, many already united in marriage bound themselves by the law of continency by mutual consent: the men passed to the Orders, the women to the monasteries. The mother invited the daughter to Christ, and the daughter the mother; the sister drew her sisters, and the aunt her nieces. All desired to serve Christ with equal fervor; all wished to be made partakers in this angelic life which had become renowned through

* See Cant. 1:3.

Clare. Innumerable virgins, moved by the accounts of Clare, not being able to embrace the life of the Cloister, sought to live as religious without a rule in their own homes. Thus did the virgin Clare bring forth by her example such great fruits of salvation that in her would seem to be fulfilled the prophetic utterance: "Many are the children of the desolate more than of her that hath a husband." *

* Isaias 54: 1.

HOW THE REPORT OF HER GOODNESS SPREAD EVEN TO DISTANT LANDS

LEST the new source of heavenly blessing which had sprung up in the vale of Spoleto[109] should in a short time dry up, it grew, Divine Providence so disposing, into a river, so that it might make the whole City of the Church joyful.* For the novelty of such things spread far and wide in the world and everywhere began to gain souls for Christ. Clare, remaining enclosed, began to enlighten the whole earth and to become renowned by the praises of all. The fame of her virtues filled the dwellings of illustrious women; it reached the palaces of duchesses, and even the private apartments of queens. The flower of the nobility stooped to follow in her steps, and its pride of lineage was brought low by holy humility. Not a few worthy of being given in marriage to dukes and kings did severe penance, inspired by the example of Clare,[110] and those who had married potentates took Clare as their model. Cities without number were adorned with mon-

* See Ps. 45 : 5.

asteries, and even country districts and mountain places were beautified with the dwellings of this celestial institute.[111] By the most holy example of Clare the esteem of chastity increased in the world and virginity, come to life again, began to flourish. With these blessed flowers brought forth by Clare the Church has happily become verdant in our day, and with them she, too, asks to be surrounded, saying: "Stay me up with flowers . . . because I languish with love." * But now our pen must needs revert to our subject, that it may be made known of what sort was her manner of life.

* Cant. 2:5.

OF HER HOLY HUMILITY

CLARE, the corner-stone and noble foundation of her Order, sought from the very first to raise the edifice of all virtues upon the basis of holy humility. For she promised holy obedience to the Blessed Francis, and from this promise she never receded. During the three years that followed her conversion Clare declined the name and office of Abbess, humbly wishing to be subject rather than to be set over others, and to serve most willingly among the daughters of Christ rather than to be served. But on being urged by the Blessed Francis, she finally undertook the government of the Ladies.[112] Because of assuming this office fear and not haughtiness arose in her heart, nor was her freedom augmented, but rather diminished. For the more she was seen to be raised above others by any kind of governance, the more lowly, the more fit to serve, and the less worthy of esteem she was in her own eyes. She never shrank from any menial duty, so that she often poured water on the hands of the Sisters, assisted those who were infirm and served those who were eating. It was with great reluctance that she ever com-

manded anything. She did a thing of her own accord, preferring to perform a task herself than to impose it on the Sisters. With that noble spirit of hers Clare herself waited upon the Sisters who were ill and washed them, neither shirking what was disagreeable nor dreading what was disgusting.[112] She often washed the feet of the servants returning from without, and having washed their feet, she was wont to kiss them. She was once washing the feet of a certain servant and, being about to kiss them, the servant, not brooking so great humility, withdrew her foot, thus striking her lady in the face. But Clare, gently grasping the servant's foot again, imprinted a fervent kiss upon the sole of it.

OF HER TRUE AND HOLY POVERTY

HER poverty in regard to all things included that poverty of spirit which is true humility. And first of all, in the very beginning of her conversion, Clare caused the paternal inheritance which had come to her to be sold and, reserving nothing of the price for herself, gave it all to the poor. Thus, having left the world without and being enriched within she was able, not being burdened with a purse, to run after Christ. In fine she made with holy poverty so strict a compact and acquired such a love for it that she wished not to have anything save only the Lord Christ, nor did she permit her daughters to possess aught besides. For she knew that the most precious pearl of heavenly desire which she had bought by selling all that she had * was not to be possessed along with a carking care for worldly things. She frequently impressed upon the Sisters by her words that the community would be pleasing to God only when it was rich in poverty, and that then only would it remain firm forever if it was always fortified by the most high poverty.

* An allusion to Matt. 13:46.

She exhorted them to be conformed in the little nest of poverty to Christ the Poor One, whom His poor little Mother had lain as a Babe in a narrow manger.* With this peculiar reminder Clare adorned her breast, as if with a golden necklace, lest the dust of worldly things might creep into her heart. Wishing that her Order should bear the title of Poverty, Clare petitioned Innocent III, of happy memory, for the privilege of Poverty. This magnanimous man, congratulating the virgin upon such fervor, declared hers to be a unique proposal, since never before had a like privilege been demanded of the Apostolic See. And in order that an unusual favor might respond to an unusual request, the Pontiff, with great joy, himself wrote with his own hand [114] the first letters of the privilege asked for. The Lord Pope Gregory, of happy memory, a man most worthy of the Chair as he was most venerable in merits,[115] loved the Saint most dearly with a paternal affection. As he was seeking to persuade her that, on account of the condition of the times and the dangers of the age, she should consent to have some possessions which he himself liberally offered, she resisted with an unyielding resolve and would in nowise acquiesce. To whom the Pontiff answered: "If thou fearest thy vow, we release thee from the vow." "Holy Father," she said, "Never

* See Luke 2:7.

do I wish to be released in anywise from following Christ forever." [116]

The fragments of bread and other odds and ends which the questors brought back she received most gladly, and as if saddened by whole loaves, rejoiced rather in broken pieces.[117] In short, she strove to become conformed by a most perfect poverty to the poor Crucified One, to the end that no perishable thing might separate the Lover from his beloved or hinder her course toward God. There now occur two miracles which this lover of poverty merited to work.

MIRACLE OF THE MULTIPLICATION OF BREAD

THERE was once only a single loaf of bread in the monastery, and the time of hunger and the hour for eating had come. Having called the refectorian, the Saint bade her divide the loaf and send half of it to the Friars and keep the rest for the Sisters. Of this remaining half she ordered fifty pieces to be made, according to the number of the Ladies, and placed before them at the table of Poverty. When the devout daughter made answer that in this case the ancient miracles of Christ would be necessary in order that such a small piece of bread might be divided into fifty parts,* the mother replied, "Do what I tell thee, daughter, and trust what I say." While the daughter hastened to fulfill the mother's commands, the mother hastened to direct her pious sighs to her Christ for her daughters. By the Divine favor the little piece of bread increased in the hands of her who broke it and an abundant portion was provided for each one of the community.[118]

* An allusion to John 6:7 *ff.*

ANOTHER MIRACLE, OF OIL MIRACULOUSLY GRANTED

ON A certain day the oil had so completely failed the handmaids of Christ that there was no seasoning even for the weak. The Lady Clare took a vessel and this mistress of humility washed it with her own hands; she then placed this empty vessel apart, that the Brother questor should take it, and the Brother was called that he might seek oil. The devoted Brother hastened to relieve such great want and ran to fetch the vessel. "But it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." * For through the intervention of God alone that vessel was found filled with oil, the prayer of St. Clare having anticipated the solicitude of the Friar for the succor of the poor daughters. The aforesaid Brother however, having seemingly been called in vain, murmuring a little said: "These women have called me in jest, for behold the vessel is full!"

* Rom 9: 16.

OF THE MORTIFICATION OF HER FLESH

IT WERE more fitting perhaps to be silent as to Clare's mortification of her flesh than to speak of it, since the things she did were of such kind as to astonish the hearer and to tax one's credulity. It was a small thing that she was wont to cover rather than to warm her little body with a single small tunic and a poor mantle made of rough cloth. Nor is it to be wondered at that she was altogether unacquainted with the use of shoes. It was no great thing for her to continue her fasts the whole time or to use a hard bed. For in all these things, since the others in her monastery did the same, Clare does not perhaps merit any special praise. But what covenant is there between a virgin's flesh and a pigskin garment? For the most holy virgin had procured for herself a garment made of a hog's skin, which she wore secretly beneath her tunic with the roughly-cut hairs next to her flesh. She was accustomed at times to wear a rough shirt made of horses' hair, twisted in a knot, which was fastened to her body on either side by little raw cords. When Clare

had lent this garment to one of the household who had asked for it, and the latter had put it on, she quickly succumbed to such harshness and gave it up after three days with more readiness than she had cheerfulness in asking for it. The bare ground and sometimes cuttings of vines served for her bed; a hard block of wood placed under her head took the place of a pillow. In the course of time, her body having become weakened, Clare lay on a mat and kindly allowed her head a little straw. But after a long illness began to lay hold of the body that had been so harshly treated, Clare at the command of the Blessed Francis, used a sack filled with straw. Moreover, so great was the rigor of her abstinence in fasting that she would scarcely have lived in the body on the meager fare she took unless another power kept her up. For while she was well, fasting upon bread and water during the greater Lent and the Lent of St. Martin, the Bishop,[119] she tasted wine only on Sundays if she had any. And that you who hear it may wonder at what you cannot imitate, she took no food whatever on three days of the week during these Lents, to wit on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Thus the days of her meager fare and the days of her strict mortification followed one another in such wise that the vigil of perfect fasting was, as it were, made up for by the feast of bread and water. No wonder if such sever-

ity, kept up for a long time, made Clare subject to infirmities; if it consumed her strength; if it undermined her bodily vigor. Wherefore her most attached daughters were wont to pity their mother, and they deplored with tears those deaths which she underwent daily. The Blessed Francis and the Bishop of Assisi finally forbade Clare these three days of destructive fast, commanding that she allow no day to pass without taking a repast of at least one ounce and a half of bread. Although severe treatment of the body as a rule engenders affliction of spirit it was far otherwise with Clare. For she preserved a pleasant and joyful countenance in all her mortification, so that she seemed either not to feel bodily austerities or to laugh at them. From which it is very easy to understand how the holy joy with which she abounded interiorly became visible exteriorly: for love of heart lightens chastisement of the body.

OF HER PRACTICE OF HOLY PRAYER

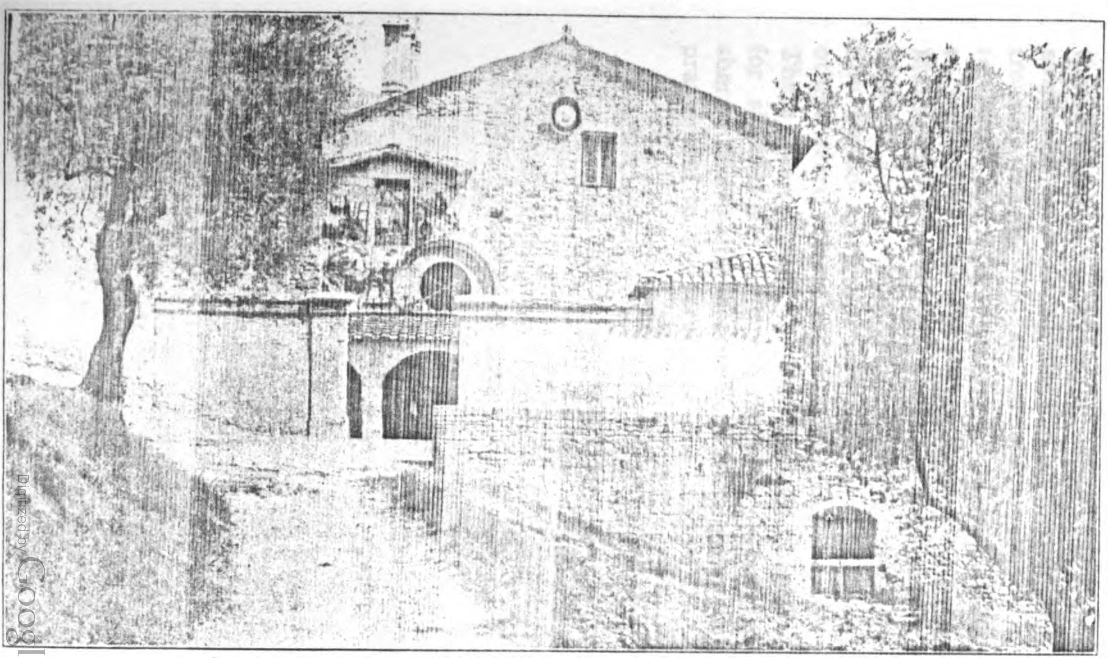
SHE who, being thus prematurely dead in the flesh, was also wholly a stranger to the world, occupied her soul continually with holy prayer and the Divine praises. She had already directed the most fervent gaze of her inward desire toward the light; and in proportion as she soared above things of earth, the depths of her soul were enlarged to receive the showers of grace. For long periods after Compline she prayed with the Sisters; and when she burst into a flood of tears the others were moved to weep also. And after the rest had gone to their hard couches to rest their tired limbs, Clare remained watchful and unwearied in prayer, so that while sleep lay hold of the others she might by stealth, as it were, receive the veins of the Divine whisper.* Prostrate on her face in prayer, she would very often bedew the ground with her tears and caress it with her kisses, so that she seemed ever to clasp her Jesus on whose feet those tears flowed and those kisses were imprinted.† Once in the dead of night, as she

* See Job 4:12.

† An allusion to Luke 7:38 *ff*.

was weeping, the angel of darkness stood by her in the form of a black boy and admonished her, saying: "Weep not so much, for thou shalt become blind." "He will not be blind who shall see God," straightway replied Clare, whereupon he departed in confusion. The same night after Matins, while Clare was praying as usual bathed in tears, the deceitful counsellor approached. "Weep not so much," he said, "lest in the end thy brain, becoming softened, should flow out through thy nose: in any case thou wilt have a twisted nose." "He suffereth no injury," replied Clare quickly, "who serveth the Lord," and the devil at once making off, vanished. How much strength she received in the furnace of fervent prayer and how much the Divine goodness sweetened her in its enjoyment were manifested by different tokens. For when she returned with gladness from holy prayer she brought with her from the fire of the Lord's altar burning words which enkindled the hearts of the Sisters. They marveled indeed at the sweetness that proceeded from her lips and to see her face more resplendent than usual, for God had certainly provided in His sweetness for the poor one,* and had manifested outwardly in her body how her mind had been filled with true light in prayer. Thus in this unstable world Clare, joined most steadfastly to her noble

* See Ps. 67: 11.



S. Damiano
showing window at which Saint Clare routed the Saracens

Spouse, took continual delight in the things that are above. Thus in this transitory globe sustained by solid virtue and enclosing the treasure of glory in an earthen vessel,* she remained below as to her body but on high as to her mind. It was her custom to go to Matins before the younger ones, whom quietly arousing by knocking she called to the praises. She would often light the lamps while the others were asleep and ring the bell herself. There was no place for the body and no room for slothfulness in her community, where a sharp reprimand aroused any languor in prayer and in the service of the Lord.[120]

* See II Cor. 4:7.

OF THE WONDERS WROUGHT THROUGH HER PRAYERS, AND FIRST OF THE SARACENS BEING MARVELOUSLY PUT TO FLIGHT

AT THIS point we may perhaps relate some great things wrought by her prayers, as well founded in truth as worthy of veneration. By reason of the calamities which the Church suffered in different parts of the world under the Emperor Frederick, the valley of Spoleto very often drank of the chalice of wrath. Bands of soldiers and of Saracen archers numerous as bees were stationed by the imperial command to lay waste fortified castles and to besiege cities.[121] And when at one time their hostile fury was directed against Assisi, the special city of God, and the army was already close to the gates, the Saracens, that worst of races who thirst for the blood of Christians and most shamelessly attempt every wickedness, rushed into the confines of S. Damiano, even into the cloister of the virgins. The hearts of the ladies sank within them from fear, their voices trembled with terror, and they went in tears to the mother. Although she was ill, Clare with a stout heart directed that she be

led to the door and placed before the enemy, a silver casket enclosed in ivory, in which the Body of the Holy of Holies was most devoutly kept, preceding her. And as she wholly prostrated herself before the Lord in prayer she said to her Christ amid tears: "Doth it please Thee, my Lord, to deliver Thy defenceless handmaids, whom I have nourished with Thy love, into the hands of the pagans? Defend, O Lord, I beseech Thee, these Thy servants whom I in this hour am unable to defend." Presently He sent her of His special grace a voice as if of a little child which sounded in her ears: "I will always defend thee." "My Lord," she said, "and if it please Thee protect the city, for it supporteth us for love of Thee." And the Lord answered: "It will be troubled, but it shall be defended by My protection." Then the virgin, raising her tearful face, comforted the weeping, saying: "Rest assured, I bid you, little daughters, that ye shall suffer no harm; only trust in Christ." Nor had an instant elapsed before, the boldness of these dogs being changed into fear, they quickly descended the walls they had scaled, being overthrown by the power of her prayers.[122] Then straightway Clare solemnly enjoined those who had heard the aforesaid voice, saying: "Be most careful in no way, dearest daughters, to reveal that voice to any one so long as I live."

ANOTHER LIKE MIRACLE CONCERNING THE DELIVERANCE OF THE CITY

AT ANOTHER time, Vitalis of Aversa, a man desirous of renown and valiant in battle, led the imperial army, which he commanded as captain, against Assisi. He had stripped the land of trees, devastated the entire countryside, and thus was ready to besiege the city. In menacing words he swore that he would never withdraw until he had taken it; and things had come to such a pass that the city was thought to be in immediate danger. When Clare, the servant of Christ, heard this, she sighed deeply and, calling the Sisters to her, said: "From this city, dearest daughters, we have daily received many benefits: it would be most ungrateful if we were not to aid it so far as we can in the time of its need." She ordered ashes to be brought and told the Sisters to bare their heads. And she first sprinkled her own uncovered head copiously with ashes and then placed some on the heads of the others. "Betake yourselves," she said, "to our Lord and beg with all your hearts for the deliverance of the city." Why go into de-

tails? Why recount the tears of the virgins or their vehement prayers? The following morning the merciful God so made issue with temptation * that the entire army was broken up and the proud man departed, contrary to his vows; neither did he harass that land any further. For the leader of the war himself perished by the sword soon afterward.[128]

* An allusion to I Cor. 10:13.

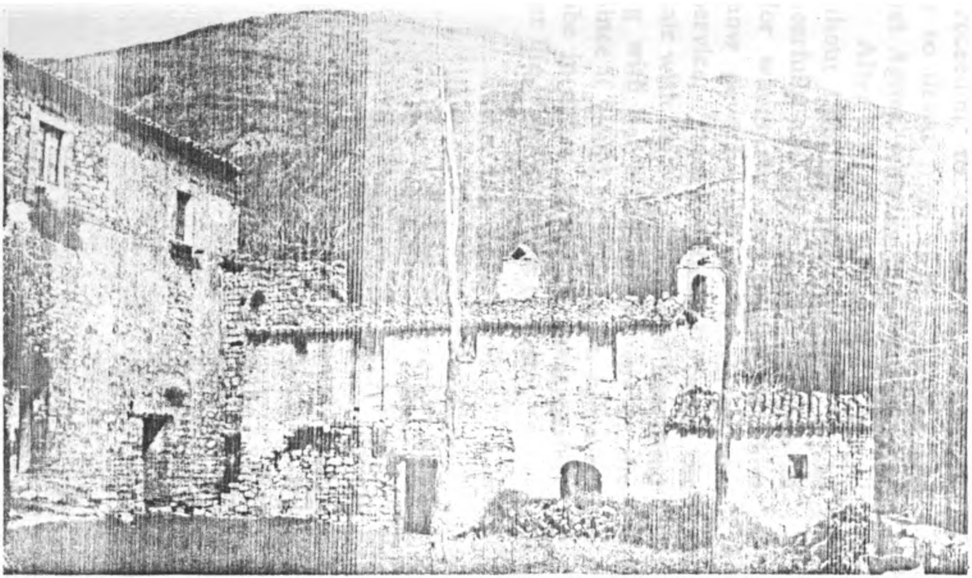
OF THE POWER OF HER PRAYERS IN THE CONVERSION OF HER OWN SISTER

WE MUST not pass over in silence that wonderful power of her prayer by which in the very beginning of her conversion Clare converted a soul to God and defended the one converted. For she had a sister tender in years, her own sister by nature and in purity.[124] Desiring her conversion, Clare, among the first fruits of the prayer which she offered to God in the fullness of her heart, asked earnestly that, as she had been of one soul with her sister whilst in the world, so they might now be of one mind in the service of God. She prayed, therefore, importunately to the Father of Mercies that the world might become insipid to her sister Agnes who had been left at home, that she might savor the sweetness of God and so turn from any intention of earthly nuptials to the union of His love; that along with herself Agnes might wed the Spouse of Glory in perpetual virginity. For, although of different temperaments, they were attached to each other by a deep mutual love which had made this new separation painful

to both. The Divine Majesty gave speedy heed to the powerful petitioner and the more quickly granted her this first gift which she asked for especially, and which delighted God most to give. Sixteen days after the conversion of Clare, Agnes, moved by the Divine Spirit, hastened to her sister [125] and, opening to her the secrets of her heart, declared that she wished to give herself wholly to the service of the Lord. Clare joyfully embraced her, saying: "I give thanks to God, most sweet sister, that He hath hearkened to my solicitude concerning thee."

This wonderful conversion was followed by a protection no less marvelous. For while the happy sisters were following the footsteps of Christ in the Church of S. Angelo de Panzo, and while she who knew more of the things of the Lord instructed her novice and sister, fresh persecutions were suddenly set on foot against the girls by their relatives. Hearing that Agnes had gone over to Clare, twelve men, infuriated with rage, ran to the place the next day and outwardly dissimulating their malicious purpose feigned a peaceful entry. Turning at once to Agnes—for they had long since despaired of Clare—"Why," they said, "didst thou come to this place? Make ready at once to return home with us." When she replied that she was unwilling to leave her sister Clare, one of the knights in an outburst of

anger rushed upon her and, sparing neither blows nor kicks, attempted to drag her away by the hair, while the others pressed forward and lifted her up in their arms. But the young girl, captured as it were by lions and snatched out of the hands of the Lord, cried out: "Help me, dearest sister, and suffer me not to be taken from Christ the Lord." Wherefore, whilst her rough captors were dragging the struggling girl down the slope of the mountain, rending her clothing and strewing the way with her torn hair, Clare in tears, prostrating herself in prayer, asked that strength of will might be granted to her sister and that the force of men might be overcome by the Divine power. Suddenly the body of Agnes as she lay on the ground seemed to be fixed there so that several men striving with all their might were not able to carry her across a little brook. Some others running from the fields and vineyards came to aid them, but they were unable in any way to raise the body from the ground. And when they failed in their attempt they praised the miracle in mocking terms, saying: "She was eating lead all night and, therefore, it is no wonder she is so heavy." And now when the Lord Monaldus, Agnes's uncle, was so beside himself with rage that he would fain have dealt her a fatal blow, a terrible pain suddenly seized the arm he had raised and its acuteness tormented him for a



Site of S. Angelo in Panzo on Mt. Subasio

long time. But behold after the long struggle, Clare proceeding to the spot besought her relatives to desist from such a conflict and to entrust Agnes, who lay there half dead, to her care. After they had withdrawn in bitterness without fulfilling their purpose, Agnes arose cheerfully and rejoicing in the cross of Christ for whom she had fought this first battle, now gave herself up forever to the Divine service. Then the Blessed Francis cut off her hair with his own hands and instructed her along with her sister in the way of the Lord. Since it would be impossible, however, to describe in a few words the great perfection of her life,[126] let us return to Clare.

ANOTHER MIRACLE, OF THE CASTING OUT OF DEVILS

IT IS no wonder if the prayers of Clare so much availed against the malice of men when they overpowered even the very demons. A certain devout woman from the diocese of Pisa once came to the place [127] to give thanks to God and to St. Clare that, through the merits of the Saint, she had been freed from five demons. For the demons at their expulsion, confessed that the prayers of St. Clare had enraged them and cast them out of the body of the possessed. Not without reason did the Lord Pope Gregory place very great faith in the prayers of this Saint, for he had experienced their marvelous virtue and efficacy. Often indeed when some new difficulty would arise, as is wont to happen, both when he was Bishop of Ostia and after he had been raised to the Apostolic See, he would call upon the same virgin by letter to ask her assistance, and he received help.[128] That the Vicar of Christ should seek succor from a handmaid of Christ and commend himself to her aid is an example surely as remarkable for humility as it is worthy of all imitation. He well knew

what love can do and how freely pure virgins have access to the council chamber of Majesty. For if the King of Heaven gives Himself to those who love Him ardently, what is there, if it be expedient, that He will not grant to their pious prayers?

OF HER WONDERFUL DEVOTION TOWARD THE SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR

HOW great was the devotion St. Clare felt toward the Sacrament of the Altar is shown by the fact that during the severe illness which had confined her to bed she had herself raised in a sitting position and supported by props, and thus she spun the finest linens. From these she made more than fifty sets of corporals and, enclosing them in silken or purple burses, sent them to different churches in the plains and mountains about Assisi.[129] When about to receive the Body of the Lord, Clare shed burning tears and approached with awe, for she feared Him not less hidden in the Sacrament than ruling heaven and earth.[130]

OF A TRULY WONDERFUL CONSOLATION WHICH THE LORD GRANTED HER IN HER ILLNESS

As Clare in her infirmity was mindful of Christ,* so Christ also visited her in her sufferings. At the hour of the Nativity, when the earth sings with the angels of the new-born Babe, the other Ladies went to the oratory for Matins and left the Mother alone, weighed down with illness. Clare then began to think on the little Jesus and to grieve sorely that she might not be present at His praises, and said with a sigh, "Lord God, behold I am left alone with Thee in this place." And lo! suddenly the wonderful music that was being sung in the Church of S. Francesco began to resound in her ears; she heard the voices of the Friars chanting the psalter, she listened to the harmonies of the singers; she even perceived the sound of the organ. She was by no means so near to the place that all this could happen in the natural order unless either the solemnity was brought nearer to her by Divine

* The Latin *memoria memor erat* contains an allusion to Lam. 3:20.

influence or her hearing was endowed with superhuman power.[181] But what surpasses even this marvel is the fact that Clare was worthy to see the manger of the Lord. In the morning when her daughters came to her the Blessed Clare said: "Blessed be the Lord Jesus Christ, who when ye left me did not abandon me. By the grace of Christ I have indeed heard all the solemnities which were celebrated last night in the Church of S. Francesco." [182]

OF HER MOST FERVENT LOVE OF THE CRUCIFIED

CLARE was accustomed to grieve over the Lord's Passion. She would at one time draw from the Sacred Wounds sorrowful affections; at another she disdained sweeter joys. The tears of the suffering Christ inebriated her, and she often represented to her memory Him whom love had impressed so deeply on her heart. She taught the novices to bewail Christ Crucified, and what she taught by word she wrought by her acts. For often when she was exhorting them in secret to these things her words would be anticipated by a flow of tears. During the hours of Sext and None [183] she usually felt greater compunction so that she might be immolated as a victim with Christ. Once it happened, as she was praying in her little cell at the hour of None, the devil gave her such a blow on the cheek that her eyes became bloodshot and her face livid. In order that she might feed her mind without intermission on the delights of the Crucified, Clare very often pondered over a prayer on the Five Wounds of our Lord.[184] She learned the Office of the

Cross, as Francis, the lover of the Cross, had composed it, and repeated it with as much feeling as he did.[135] She girded to her bare flesh, as a secret reminder of the Saviour's wounds, a little cord having thirteen knots charged with rings.

OF A CERTAIN REMEMBRANCE OF THE LORD'S PASSION

ONCE upon a time the day had arrived of the most holy Supper by which the Lord loved His own unto the end.* Toward evening as the [hour of the] Lord's agony drew nigh Clare, sad and sorrowful, shut herself up in the seclusion of her cell. And as praying she followed the Lord at prayer, her soul being sorrowful even unto death,† she drew from that sorrow a fervent love and, being inebriated by the remembrance of how He was taken captive and mocked, she sat upon the bed. During all of that night, therefore, and of the next day she remained thus wholly absorbed and a stranger to herself so that her eyes, ever intent upon one object, were fixed upon Christ, and she seemed completely insensible. A certain trusted daughter returned to Clare several times to see whether she might need anything, and always found her in the same position. But when Friday night had come this devoted daughter lit a candle and, without speaking, made a sign to remind the

* *I. e.,* Maundy Thursday: an allusion to John 13:1.
† See Matt. 26:38.

mother of the precept of St. Francis. For the Saint had commanded that no day should pass without her taking something to eat.[136] Clare, having with the aid of the Sister returned as it were, from elsewhere, asked this question: "What need is there of a candle? Is it not day?" "Mother," said she, "night has gone and the day hath passed and another night is come." Clare made answer: "Blessed be that sleep, dearest daughter, for that which I so long desired has been granted to me, but beware lest thou tell any one of this sleep so long as I live."

OF DIVERS MIRACLES WHICH SHE WORKED BY THE SIGN AND POWER OF THE CROSS

THE Crucified One whom she loved repaid her who loved Him like for like, and she who was inflamed with such great love toward the Mystery of the Cross was glorified by the power of the Cross in signs and miracles. For whenever Clare applied the life-giving sign of the Cross to the diseased their malady wondrously disappeared. I will touch upon a few instances out of many: Blessed Francis sent to the Lady Clare a certain Friar named Stephen who was afflicted with frenzy, that she might make the sign of the most holy Cross over him. For he knew her great sanctity and revered the greatness of her power. This daughter of obedience, at the command of the Father, signed Stephen with the sign of the Cross and made him sleep for a little while in the place where she was wont to pray. After a short sleep the Brother rose up sound and returned to the Father delivered from his insanity.

A certain boy of three years named Mattiolo from the city of Spoleto had forced a pebble

up his nose. No one had been able to remove it, nor was the boy able to force it out. Being in danger of death by reason of his great suffering, he was led to the Lady Clare, and when he was signed by her with the sign of the Cross, the stone being thrust from his nose, the boy was at once healed. Another boy from Perugia having one eye entirely covered with a sore was brought to the holy servant of God, who, touching the boy's eye, made the sign of the Cross upon it and said: "Take him to my mother that she may repeat the sign of the Cross over him." For be it said that her mother, the Lady Ortolana, following her plantlet, had entered the Order after her daughter, and as a widow served the Lord among the virgins in the enclosed garden.[137] No sooner had the boy been signed by her with the Cross than his eye was freed from the ulcer and he saw clearly and distinctly. Clare, therefore, averred that the boy had been healed through the merit of her mother, but the mother made over all the praise to her daughter, asserting that she was unworthy of so great a thing.

One of the Sisters, named Benevenuta, had been suffering for twelve years from an ulcerous wound under the arm which discharged bloody matter in five different places. Clare, the virgin of God, touched with pity for her, applied her peculiar salve, the health-

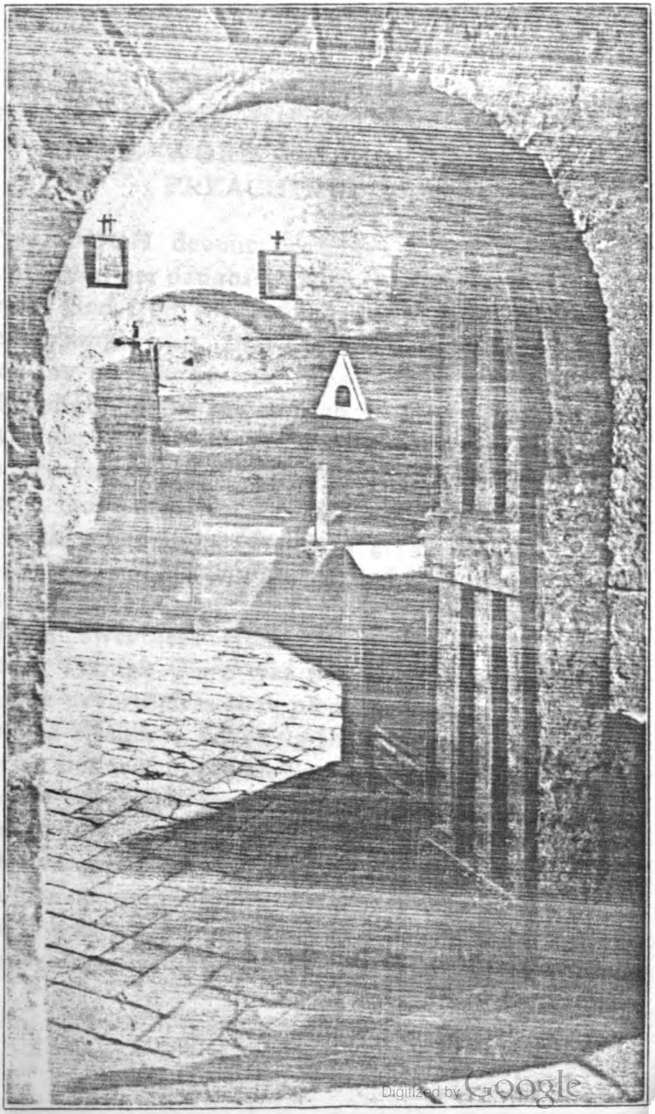
giving sign, and, on being signed with the Cross, Benevenuta was at once perfectly cured of the long-standing ulcer. Another among the Sisters, Amata by name,[138] had been afflicted with dropsy for thirteen months; exhausted, moreover, by fever, coughing and a pain in the side, she was confined to bed. Clare, being moved to compassion for her, had recourse to the aid of her noble remedy. She made the sign of the Cross upon Amata in the name of her Christ and immediately restored her to the fullness of health. Another handmaid of Christ, a native of Perugia, had for two years lost her voice so completely that she was scarcely able to utter a word. Now when on the night of the Assumption of Our Lady it was shown to her in a vision that the Lady Clare would heal her, she awaited the day with longing. No sooner had it dawned than she hastened to the Mother and asked for the sign of the Cross, and being signed she speedily recovered her voice. A certain Sister, named Cristiana, had been suffering from deafness in one ear for a long time and had used many remedies to relieve this malady, but in vain. The Lady Clare gently signed her on the forehead, touched her ear, and there and then she regained the power of hearing.[139] There was a great multitude of sick Sisters in the monastery[140] afflicted with divers ills. Clare as usual entered the place[141] with her

wonted medicine and, having made the sign of the Cross five times, five were immediately cured of their infirmities. From these facts it is surely clear that the tree of the Cross was deeply rooted in the heart of the virgin and that, while its fruit refreshed the soul, its leaves yielded medicine for the body.[140]

OF HER DAILY INSTRUCTION OF THE SISTERS

SEEING that she was the teacher of the untutored and, as it were, the mistress of the maidens in the palace of the Great King, Clare instructed them [the Sisters] in such discipline and cherished them with such love as cannot be described in words. She taught them in the first place to shut out all tumult from their minds so that they might be intent only upon the hidden things of God. She taught them next not to be affected by the love of their kinsfolk and to forget their home and country in order to please Christ. She exhorted them to make no account of the demands of the perishable body and to subject the conceits of the flesh to the control of reason. She showed them how the cunning enemy lays hidden snares for pure souls; how he tempts saints in one way and worldlings in another. Finally, she desired that they should labor with their hands at certain hours,[148] so that they might continually be enkindled with new fervor to do the will of God in the exercise of prayer and that, leaving off the torpor of negligence, they might

replace the coldness of indevotion by the warmth of holy love. In no place was silence better kept; nowhere was there greater observance and pursuance of all that is becoming; neither did continuous talking bespeak a spirit of loquacity; nor did levity of words show forth a spirit of frivolity. For the mistress herself was sparing in words and expressed her mind most concisely with brevity of speech.



OF HER EAGER DESIRE TO HEAR THE WORD OF HOLY PREACHING

THROUGH devout preachers Clare provided her daughters with the food of the word of God, from which she herself did not derive less ample fruit. For she was filled with so much joy in hearing holy preaching and took such delight in the remembrance of her Jesus that once, while Brother Philip of Adria[144] was preaching, there appeared to the virgin Clare a most beautiful boy who overwhelmed her with consolations during a great part of the sermon. The one who merited to witness these things regarding her Mother experienced ineffable sweetness from the sight of the vision. Though Clare was not versed in letters, she nevertheless took pleasure in hearing a learned discourse, believing that the kernel of doctrine lies within the shell of the words, and thus she enjoyed it more discerningly and listened to it with more relish. She knew how to derive what was profitable for the soul from the sermon of any speaker. For she knew it was not less prudent to pluck flowers at times from a wild thorn bush than to eat

fruit of a cultivated tree.[145] When at one time the Lord Pope Gregory had forbidden any Friar to go to the monasteries of the Ladies without his permission,[146] the loving Mother, deploring that her daughters would now less often receive the food of sound doctrine, said with a sigh: "He may as well take all the Friars from us now that he hath taken from us those who furnished us with the food of the soul." And she at once sent back all the Friars to the Minister,[147] unwilling to retain the questors who provided bodily sustenance as she might not have those who provided spiritual bread. When Pope Gregory heard this, he immediately mitigated his prohibition, leaving the matter in the hands of the Minister General.

OF HER GREAT CHARITY TOWARD THE SISTERS

NOT only did the venerable Abbess love the souls of her daughters: she also cared for their little bodies with the most charitable thoughtfulness. For very often in the cold of night she herself covered the sleeping Sisters. And she desired those whom she saw were not able to follow the strict community life to be content with a less rigorous observance. If any one was troubled with temptation or, as sometimes happens, afflicted with sadness, Clare, secretly calling the Sister to her, consoled her amidst tears. She would sometimes throw herself at the feet of the sorrowing that by motherly caresses she might allay their grief. Her daughters, not ungrateful for such favors, gave themselves to Clare with entire devotedness. For they loved her as a Mother with tender affection; they revered her as a teacher by reason of her office; they followed her as their guide in the path of perfection, and they admired her as the spouse of God endowed with every prerogative of holiness.

OF HER INFIRMITIES AND LONG ILLNESS

FOR forty years Clare had run in the race of the most high Poverty, and now, after a number of infirmities, she was nearing the prize of her supernal vocation.* For, as the strength of her body succumbed to the rigor of penance in her earlier years, illness had taken possession of her later ones so that, while in good health she had been enriched with the merit of work, she might in ill health enjoy the merit of suffering. For "power is made perfect in infirmity." † How wonderfully power had been made perfect in infirmity in her regard is most evident from the fact that during twenty-eight years of continual illness she uttered no murmur or complaint, but holy conversation and acts of thanksgiving ever came from her lips. For, though borne down with weight of her infirmities, she seemed to be hastening toward her end, it nevertheless pleased God to delay her death to such time as she might be exalted with befitting honors by the Roman Church of which she was in a special manner the disciple and the daughter.

* An allusion to I Cor. 9:24, and Phil. 3:14.

† II Cor. 12:9.

For while the Sovereign Pontiff together with the Cardinals was tarrying at Lyons,[148] Clare began to grow worse than usual, so that a sword of overwhelming sorrow pierced the hearts of her daughters. Presently a certain handmaid of Christ, a virgin consecrated to God, of the Monastery of S. Paolo of the Order of St. Benedict, had the following vision: it seemed that she, along with her Sisters, was present at the illness of the Lady Clare at S. Damiano and that the aforesaid Clare was lying on a costly bed. While they were weeping and awaiting in tears the passing of the Blessed Clare, a beautiful woman appearing at the head of the little bed addressed the sorrowing Sisters: "Weep not," she said, "O daughters, for her who will conquer: for she may not die until the Lord with His disciples shall come." And behold, after a short time, the Roman Curia arrived at Perugia. Having heard that Clare was becoming worse, the Lord of Ostia[149] hastened from Perugia to visit the spouse of Christ to whom he had been a father by reason of his office, a protector by reason of his solicitude, and ever a devoted friend by reason of his most pure affection. He nourished the invalid with the Sacrament of the Lord's Body and fed the other Sisters with words of salutary exhortation. Clare with tears besought so great a father that, for the name of Christ, he would

ever be mindful of her soul and the souls of the other Ladies. But above all else she begged that he would ask the Lord Pope and the Cardinals to confirm the privilege of Poverty.[150] This the faithful supporter of religion not only promised in word but fulfilled in deed.[151] A year having elapsed, the Lord Pope with the Cardinals moved from Perugia to Assisi,[152] so that the aforesaid vision concerning the passing of the Saint might be realized. For the Supreme Pontiff himself, who is above man and below God, represents the person of the Lord and to him the Lord Cardinals are closely attached like disciples in the temple of the Church Militant.

HOW THE LORD POPE INNOCENT VISITED, ABSOLVED AND BLESSED HER IN HER ILLNESS

DIVINE PROVIDENCE now hastened to fulfill its designs in regard to Clare. Christ hastened to call the poor pilgrim to the palace of the supernal Kingdom, and she on her part already longed and sighed with the utmost desire to be dissolved "from the body of this death," * and to see Christ reigning in the celestial mansions, whose Poverty on earth she, a poor little one, had followed with her whole heart. Clare, whose holy body was exhausted by her long illness, was overcome by new weakness which betokened her approaching call to the Lord and prepared the way for her perfect health. The Lord Pope Innocent, of holy memory, together with the Cardinals, made haste to visit the handmaid of Christ and, since he had found her life to surpass that of all the women of our time, he did not hesitate to honor her death by the Papal presence.[153] Having entered the monastery he approached the bed and touched his hand to the

* Rom. 7:24.

lips of the invalid for her to kiss. She took it most gratefully, and begged, with the utmost reverence, to be allowed to kiss the Pope's foot. The courtly Lord having mounted a wooden footstool condescendingly extended his foot, and Clare reverently inclining her head impressed a kiss upon it both above and below. With an angelic countenance, she then asked the Sovereign Pontiff for remission of all her sins. "Would to God," he said, "that I had no more need of forgiveness," as he imparted to her the favor of perfect absolution and the grace of a most ample blessing. And when they had all withdrawn, for on that day she received the Sacred Host at the hand of the Provincial Minister, Clare lifted up her eyes to heaven and, joining her hands toward God, said to her Sisters with tears: "Praise the Lord, my little daughters, that in this day Christ hath vouchsafed me a favor so great that heaven and earth would not suffice to repay it. This day," she said, "I have merited to receive the Most High Himself and to behold His Vicar."

HOW SHE REPLIED TO HER WEEPING SISTER

THE daughters so soon to be left orphans stood about the bed of their Mother and their hearts were pierced with a sword of bitter anguish.* Sleep did not overcome them, nor did hunger draw them away; unmindful of rest and food, their only solace was to weep night and day. Amongst them the pious virgin Agnes, overwhelmed by a flood of tears, besought her sister not to depart and leave her. To whom Clare replied, "It is pleasing to God, dearest sister, that I go hence. But, as for thee, cease weeping, for thou shalt come to the Lord soon after myself and before I depart from thee the Lord will grant thee a great consolation." [154]

* See Luke 2:35.

OF HER LAST END AND OF THE THINGS THAT HAPPENED AND WERE SEEN AT THAT TIME

FINALLY it seemed that her agony was to last for many days, during which the faith and devotion of the people became more intense. She was likewise honored daily as a very saint by the frequent visits of Cardinals and prelates. And it is surely marvelous to hear that, although she could take no food of any kind for seventeen days, Clare was nevertheless endowed by God with such fortitude that she strengthened in the service of Christ all who came to her. For when that kindly man Brother Rainaldo exhorted her to patience in the long martyrdom of such great infirmities, Clare replied most courageously, "Dearest Brother, ever since I have known the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ through His servant Francis, no suffering hath troubled me, no penance hath been hard, no illness arduous." And as the Lord dealt favorably with her and stood, as it were, already at the gate, Clare desired the priests and spiritual Friars to assist her and to read for her the Passion and holy words

of the Lord.[155] When Brother Juniper, the renowned jester of the Lord, who often uttered fiery words of God, appeared amongst them, Clare, filled with new joy, asked him whether he had anything new at hand about the Lord.[156] Juniper, thereupon opening his mouth, sent forth like sparks such flaming words from the furnace of his burning heart that the virgin of God derived great consolation from what he said. Finally she turned toward her weeping daughters and commending to them the poverty of the Lord, recalled the Divine benefits in words of praise. Then she blessed all who had been kind to her, both men and women, and invoked a benediction rich in graces upon all the Ladies of the poor monasteries present and to come.[157] As to the rest, who can relate it without tears? Two of the holy companions of the Blessed Francis stood near. One of them, Angelo, though weeping himself, comforted the rest in their sorrow. The other, Leo, kissed the bed of the dying Saint.[158] Clare's forsaken daughters wept at the departure of their beloved Mother and with their tears they followed her whom they were to see no more. They grieved most bitterly, that all their solace was to pass away with Clare and that they were to be left in this vale of tears,* without their teacher to comfort them any longer. Shame barely re-

* See Ps. 83:7.

strained them from doing violence to their bodies, and they felt the pangs of sorrow more keenly because they might not give vent to it by exterior grief. For the rule of the cloister enjoined silence and the vehemence of their sorrow demanded sobs and sighs. Their faces were swollen with tears and yet the pain of their stricken hearts still brought forth new tears.

But the most holy virgin adverting to herself, spoke to her own soul softly: "Go forth," she said, "without fear. For thou hast a good guide for thy journey. Go forth," she said, "for He who created thee hath sanctified thee and, protecting thee always, loveth thee with a love as tender as that of a mother for her son. Blessed be Thou, Lord," she said, "who hast created me." When one of the Sisters asked her to whom she was speaking, Clare replied: "I am speaking to my blessed soul." Nor was that glorious guide far distant. For, turning to a certain daughter, she asked: "O daughter, dost thou see the King of Glory whom I behold?" And the hand of the Lord came upon another one [one of the Sisters],* and with her bodily eyes she beheld in her tears a blissful vision. Wounded with a dart of profound sorrow, she directed her gaze toward the door of the house. And behold! there entered a multitude of virgins, clothed in white garments, all of

* An allusion to IV Kings 3: 15.

whom wore golden crowns upon their heads.* There walked one amongst them more resplendent than the rest, from whose crown, which in its uppermost part had the appearance of a windowed thurible, such splendor shone forth within the house as to change the night itself into daylight. She advanced to the bed where the spouse of her Son lay, and bending over her lovingly embraced her most sweetly. A mantle of wondrous beauty was then brought forth by the virgins and, all working together with emulation they covered the body of Clare and adorned the couch. Thus on the day after that of Blessed Laurence that most holy soul passed away to be crowned with an everlasting reward, and, the temple of the flesh being dissolved, the spirit soared happily heavenward.[159] Blessed be this going forth from the vale of misery which for Clare became the entrance to a blessed life. And now in lieu of her poor fare on this earth she rejoices at the table of the heavenly citizens; for her mean attire she is blessed in the celestial kingdom adorned with a robe of eternal glory.

* See Apoc. 7:9.

HOW THE ROMAN CURIA WITH A CROWD OF PEOPLE FLOCKED TO THE OBSEQUIES OF THE VIRGIN

THE news of the passing of the Virgin caused a sudden consternation among the population of the entire city: men and women flocked to the place and the people came in such crowds that the city seemed to be left desolate. All proclaimed Clare a saint and one dear to God, and amid words of praise not a few burst into tears. The Podestà[160] hastened with a troop of knights and a large number of armed men and they kept close watch during that evening and the whole of the night, lest perhaps they might suffer the loss of the precious treasure that lay within.[161] The next day the whole Roman Curia was in a state of commotion. The Vicar of Christ with the Cardinals came to the place, and the whole city directed its steps toward S. Damiano. When the time came to commence the Divine service and the Friars were beginning the Office of the Dead, the Lord Pope, interrupting, said that the Office of Virgins and not the Office of the Dead ought to be



Within the Cloister at S. Chiara, showing the Chapel

recited, so that it seemed as if he would fain canonize Clare before her body had been given burial. But that most eminent man, the Lord of Ostia,[162] replying that they ought to do what was more customary in such cases, Mass for the Dead was celebrated. Then, at the instance of the Sovereign Pontiff, in the presence of the Cardinals and of the Prelates, the Bishop of Ostia, taking the subject-matter of his discourse from the Vanity of Vanities,* eulogized in a splendid sermon her who had despised vanity so nobly. Afterward the Cardinal Priests with devout condescension, standing around the sacred corpse, brought to a close the usual rites over the body of the virgin. Finally, because they deemed it neither safe nor becoming that so precious a pledge be left at such a distance from the citizens, the corpse was raised aloft amidst hymns and praises and the shouting of the crowds and solemn jubilation, and borne with all pomp to the Church of S. Giorgio. For this was the place where the body of the holy Father Francis had first been laid, so that he who while living had prepared for Clare the way of life, by a sort of presage, should also when dead prepare a place for her.[163] And thereafter people came in great crowds to the tomb of the virgin, blessing God and saying, "Truly she was a Saint. She now reigneth

* See Eccl. 1:2.

gloriously with the Angels, who on earth hath received such honor from men. Intercede for us with Christ, O first fruit of the Poor Ladies, thou who hast led innumerable souls to penance and to life!"

A few days afterward [164] Agnes, being called to the nuptials of the Lamb, followed her sister to eternal delights where both these daughters of Sion, sisters by nature, in grace and in glory, praise God unceasingly. And Agnes indeed received before she died that consolation which Clare had promised her. For as, under the guidance of her sister, she had passed over from the world to the Cross, so, while Clare was resplendent with signs and miracles, Agnes took flight after her to God from this passing world. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth world without end. Amen.

II

OF THE MIRACLES OF ST. CLARE AFTER SHE PASSED FROM THE WORLD

THOSE are the wonderful signs of the Saints, those the evidences of miracles which consist in holiness of life and fulness of good works. "John indeed did no sign," * and yet those who did signs were not holier than John. And hence the renown of her most perfect life should suffice as a witness to the sanctity of the holy virgin Clare, if it were not that partly the tepidity and partly the devotion of the people at times demanded otherwise. Resplendent, therefore, with merits while she lived, and now absorbed in the abyss of perpetual brightness, Clare is, nevertheless, still wonderfully heralded to the ends of the earth by the splendor of her miracles. The strict truth, judicially attested, compels me to set down several, yet their great number constrains me to omit a great many.

* See John 10: 41.

OF THOSE THAT WERE DELIVERED OF THE DEMON

A CERTAIN boy of Perugia named Giacobino did not seem to be ill so much as to be obsessed by a most evil demon. For at one time throwing himself wildly into the fire, again falling violently to the ground, again chewing stones until his teeth were broken, he wounded his head piteously and covered his body with blood. His mouth was distorted and his tongue protruded, while he twisted his body with such ease that he could put his leg around his neck. Twice a day this fury seized the boy, and two persons were not able to prevent him from removing his clothes. The aid of skilful physicians was employed, but no one was found who knew how to assist him. His father, Guidolotto by name, finding no remedy among men for so great a misfortune, had recourse to the merits of St. Clare. "O most holy virgin," he said; "O Clare, venerated by the whole world, to thee I dedicate this wretched child and from thee I implore his cure with all earnestness." Full of confidence, he hastened to her sepulchre and, lifting the boy, placed him on the

tomb of the virgin, whereupon he at once obtained of her the favor he had asked. For the boy was forthwith freed from that infirmity and was never after troubled with a like attack.

ANOTHER MIRACLE

ALESSANDRINA of Fratta,[165] in the diocese of Perugia, was troubled with a most wicked demon. This demon had so far gained power over her that he made her fly like a little bird about a high rock that projected over the bank of a river. He also caused her to let herself down by a very slender branch of a tree overhanging the river Tiber, and kept her there as if in play. And as she had likewise, by reason of her sins, entirely lost the use of her left side and had a withered hand, she often made trial of remedies but without relief. Alessandrina came to the tomb of the glorious virgin Clare with a contrite heart, and, having invoked her merits, she received through this single remedy a complete cure for her threefold misfortune. For her withered hand was made whole; her side was healed, and she was delivered from the demon who had possessed her. Another woman of the same place was at the same time freed from the devil and from much anguish before the tomb of the Saint.

OF A MAN CURED OF FRENZY

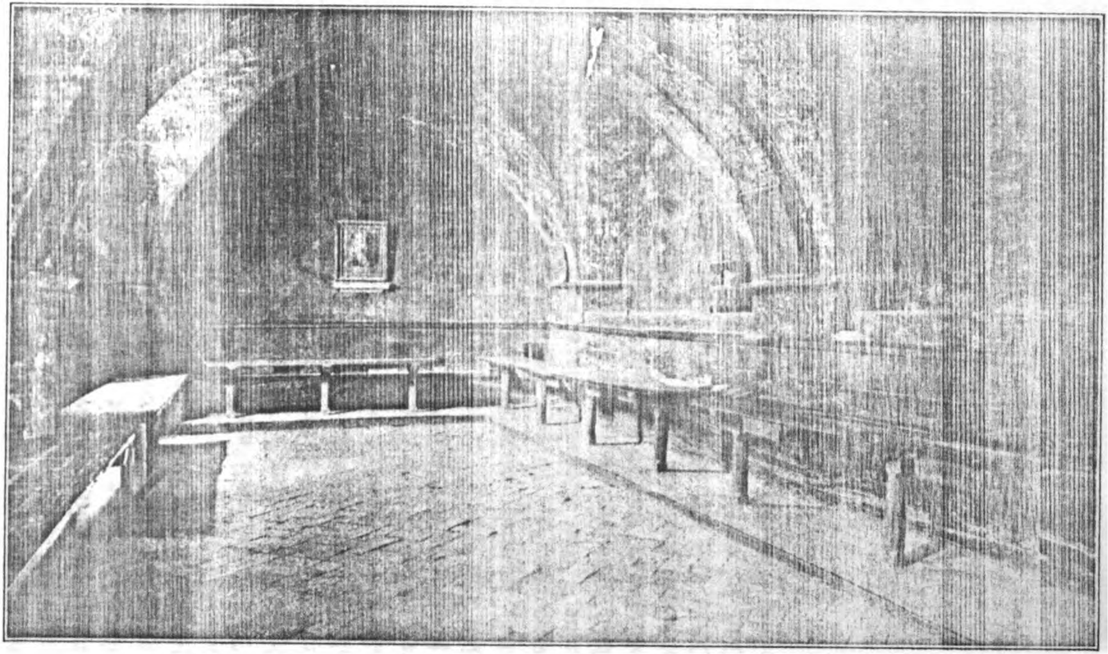
FRENZY had taken possession of a certain French youth who was attached to the Curia,[166] and had deprived him of speech and caused his body to be fearfully restless. No one was able to hold him, but he would bruise himself with great violence in the hands of those who sought to restrain him. He was tied down on a bier with strong ropes and was carried by his countrymen against his will to the Church of St. Clare, and placed before her tomb; and forthwith he was freed in a most wonderful manner through the faith of those who had brought him.

OF A PERSON WHO WAS CURED OF EPILEPSY

VALENTINO of Spello[167] was so afflicted with epilepsy that he would fall to the ground six times a day wherever he happened to be. Crippled, likewise, by a contraction in his leg he was unable to walk. He was led upon an ass to the sepulchre of St. Clare, where he lay for two days and three nights. On the third day, without any one touching him, his leg was heard to snap loudly and he was thereupon healed of both infirmities.

OF A BLIND MAN THAT RECEIVED SIGHT

A MAN named Giacobello, the son of a woman from Spoleto, had been twelve years blind and was wont to follow a guide, nor could he walk anywhere alone without falling over the precipice. For once having been left by his guide for a little while he fell over a precipice and sustained a fracture of the arm and a wound in the head. One night, while he lay asleep near the bridge at Narni,[168] a certain lady appeared to him in his sleep saying to him: "Giacobello, why dost thou not come to me at Assisi and thou shalt be cured?" Rising in the morning, he related the vision in trembling to two other blind men. They answered him: "We have recently heard that a lady died in the city of Assisi whose sepulchre the hand of the Lord is said to honor with the gift of healing and with many wonders." Having heard this, Giacobello made haste and set out promptly, and while passing the night at Spoleto he again beheld the same vision. Wholly intent on receiving his sight, he girded himself to the journey and pressed on more eagerly. But, on arriv-



Saint Clare's Refectory at S. Damiano

ing at Assisi, he found such crowds of people gathered before the sepulchre of the virgin that he could in nowise get to the tomb. He placed a stone under his head and with great faith, although sorrowing that he could not get inside, he fell asleep at the entrance. And behold! the voice spoke to him a third time: "The Lord will aid thee, Giacobello, if only thou canst enter." Awakening, therefore, and crying out, he tearfully besought the crowd and pleaded that for the love of God they would be pleased to make way for him. When the crowd had given place, Giacobello removed his shoes and took off his outer garments and tied the thongs of his shoes around his neck, and, humbly approaching the tomb in this wise, he fell into a light slumber. "Arise, arise," the Blessed Clare said to him, "for thou hast been cured." Rising up at once, his blindness had disappeared and all dimness of sight had left him; he saw clearly, through Clare, the clearness of the light and magnified God in words of praise, inviting all men to bless Him for a work of such greatness.[169]

OF THE RESTORATION OF A LOST HAND

A CERTAIN Perugian named Buon Giovanni had gone out with his fellow-citizens against the men of Foligno.[170] Soon after the conflict had begun, his hand was broken, being completely crushed by the blow of a stone. He spent much money on physicians in the hope of a cure, but was not able to find any help through medicine, so that his hand remained useless and he was unable to do any work whatever. Grieving, therefore, at having to bear the burden of a right hand that could hardly be called his own, he often wished to have it cut off. Hearing, however, of the things which the Lord was pleased to perform through His servant Clare, he took a vow and hastened to the sepulchre of the virgin. There, having made an offering of a waxen image of a hand,[171] he lay down upon the tomb of St. Clare. Presently, before he left the church, his hand was perfectly restored.

OF THE CROOKED

ONE Petriolo of the town of Bettona[172] had been exhausted with illness for three years, and was so wasted by reason of his long infirmity that he seemed to be almost completely dried up. His back was, moreover, so contracted from the acuteness of his malady that he was crooked and bent toward the ground, and he could hardly move along even with the aid of a stick. His father had recourse to the skill of many doctors, especially of those who were learned in healing diseases of the bones; he was prepared to spend his entire fortune for the restoration of his boy to health. But when he was told by everyone that there were no means by which such a malady might be cured, he turned to the prayers of the new Saint of whose wonders he had heard. The boy was carried to the spot where the precious remains of the virgin repose, and he had not been lying long before the tomb when he obtained the grace of perfect health. He arose at once erect and sound, walking and leaping and glorifying God, and he invited the crowds of people to sing the praises of St. Clare.

There was a boy of ten years in the village of San Quirico, in the diocese of Assisi, who had been lame from his mother's womb. His shin bones were diseased and his feet were turned crosswise so that he walked crookedly and when he fell he was scarcely able to rise again. His mother had on several occasions vowed him to St. Francis, but he had not experienced any improvement. On hearing that the blessed Clare was shining forth with new miracles, the mother carried the boy to her sepulchre. After some days, the bones of his shins being healed, his body was brought back to its natural straightness, and that which St. Francis, though implored by many prayers, had not granted, his disciple Clare conceded through the Divine power.

A citizen of Gubbio named Giacomo di Franco had a boy five years old who, because of weakness in his feet, had never walked and was incapable of doing so. He, therefore, bewailed his son as a deformity in his family and a reproach to his name. The boy slept on the ground and crawled in the ashes trying at times to get on a bench, but not being able to rise. For nature, which had given him the desire to walk, had refused him the strength. His parents commended the boy to the merits of St. Clare and, that their prayers might be heard, promised that if he should be restored

to health by her, he would be called the "servant of St. Clare." The vow had scarce been made when the virgin of Christ, healing her servant, obtained for the boy offered to her the free use of his limbs. Thereupon his parents hastened with their son to the tomb of the Virgin and presented the boy, all leaping and gleeful, to the Lord.

A certain woman named Plenaria from the town of Bevagna[173] had been suffering for a long time from a contraction in her side, so that she was not able to walk except by the help of a stick. Yet even with the aid of the stick she was not able to walk erect; it merely helped her to drag along somehow with faltering steps. On a certain Friday she had herself brought to the tomb of St. Clare. There, praying with great fervor, she obtained speedily what she had asked believingly. For on the following Saturday she who had been carried from her house by others, returned thither on her own feet, having been perfectly restored to health.

OF THE HEALING OF TUMORS OF THE THROAT

A CERTAIN girl of Perugia had long suffered great pain from tumors of the throat, known in the vulgar tongue as scrofula.[174] In fact they had counted twenty swellings on the throat of the girl, and the throat itself seemed even larger than her head. Her mother often led the girl to the tomb of St. Clare where, with all devotion she implored the aid of that Saint. Once, after the girl had lain the whole night before the sepulchre, she fell into a sweat, the swellings began to soften, and little by little to pass away. In the course of time they so far disappeared, through the merits of St. Clare, that not a trace of them remained.

While the virgin Clare was still in the flesh, one of the Sisters, Andrea by name, had a like malady in her throat. It is surely strange that a soul so cold lay hidden in the midst of glowing stones and was playing the part of a foolish virgin among the wise ones.* For one night, in order to force the swelling through

* See Matt. 25: 1 *ff.*

her mouth, this Sister squeezed her throat to the point of suffocation, seeking by her own strength to outdo the Divine will. Clare at once knew of this occurrence through the Spirit. "Run," she said to one of the Sisters, "run quickly downstairs; take a warm egg and bring it to Sister Andrea of Ferrara to suck, and come back with her to me." The Sister made haste and found the aforesaid Andrea unable to speak and almost choking as a result of her own act. She relieved her as best she could, and then brought her to the mother. The servant of God said to her: "Poor wretch, confess to the Lord thy thoughts, which are well known to me. Behold the Lord Jesus Christ will heal what thou wished to heal thyself. But change thy life for the better, for thou shalt suffer another infirmity from which thou shalt not rise." At these words the Sister was moved by the spirit of compunction and improved her manner of life most notably. Cured of scrofula, she passed away before long from another illness.

The countryside was wont to be disturbed by the ruthless ferocity of cruel wolves which attacked even men and often fed upon human flesh. There was a certain woman named Bona of Monte Galliano, in the diocese of Assisi, who had two sons. She had scarcely done weeping for one of them whom the

wolves had carried off, when behold they hastened after the other one with the same rapacity. For while the mother was indoors employed in some household work a wolf laid hold of the boy who was walking outside, and seizing him by the neck made off quickly to the wood with his prey. Some men who were in the vineyards, hearing the boy's screams, called out to the mother, saying, "See whether thy son be with thee, for we have just heard some strange wailings." The mother, realizing that her son had been snatched by a wolf, lifted her voice to heaven and, filling the air with her cries, invoked the virgin Clare, thus: "O holy and glorious Clare, give me back my poor boy; give back my little son to his unhappy mother. For if thou dost not, I shall drown myself." The neighbors on running after the wolf found the infant in the wood, where he had been left by the beast, and a dog was beside the boy licking his wounds. The ferocious wolf had first fastened his fangs in the boy's neck, and had then caught hold of his side so that he might carry his prey off more easily, and had left no slight marks of the attack in both places. The woman's prayer having been heard, she hastened together with her neighbors to her helper, showing the different wounds of the boy to all who wished to see them, and returning abundant thanks to God and to St. Clare.

A little girl from the town of Cannara[175] was sitting in a field in broad daylight and another woman had laid her head in the girl's lap.[176] Behold! a man-eating wolf in quest of prey, quickly approached with furtive step. The girl saw it, but, believing it to be a dog, had no fear, and as she resumed combing the hair, the savage beast fell upon her, seizing her head in its huge fangs [and carried off his prey to the woods. The awe-stricken woman rose instantly and, mindful of St. Clare, began to cry out, saying]:[177] "Help, St. Clare, help! To thee I now commend this girl." And, wonderful to relate, she who was being borne off in the jaws of the wolf, inveighed against the beast, saying: "Thief, wilt thou dare carry me further, after I have been commended to such a virgin?" Confounded by this rebuke, the wolf instantly set the girl gently on the ground, and then, like a thief caught in the act, made off in all haste.

OF THE CANONIZATION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN CLARE.

WHEN the account of these miracles was being noised abroad and the virtues of the virgin were becoming more widely known day by day, so that the world itself was already looking forward with desire to the canonization of so great a virgin, the chair of Peter was occupied by the most clement Prince, the Lord Alexander IV, a man who was the friend of everything holy, the protector of Religious and the firm supporter of Religious Orders. The aforesaid Pontiff, moved by the number of such wonders, as though it were something unusual, began, together with the Cardinals, to treat of her canonization. Solemn and discreet persons were commissioned to examine into her miracles and the wonders of her life were also made the subject of discussion.[178] It was found that Clare while living was a most shining example of every virtue; it was found, too, that, after her death, she was worthy of admiration for real and attested miracles. On the day appointed when the Cardinals had convened and Archbishops and Bishops had assembled, together

with the clergy and religious, a great number of learned and eminent men being also present, the Supreme Pontiff laid this important matter before them and asked the opinion of the prelates. All assented promptly and showed themselves favorably disposed, saying that Clare, whom God had glorified on high, ought also to be glorified on earth.

Two years having elapsed since her death and the day of her passing to the Lord being at hand, the happy Alexander to whom this grace had been reserved by the Lord, having convoked a multitude of prelates and all the clergy, reverently and with the utmost pomp inscribed Clare in the catalogue of the Saints, and ordained that her feast be solemnly kept throughout the Church,[179] he, himself, with his whole court having first celebrated it with the greatest solemnity.

These things took place in the principal church at Anagni in the year of our Lord's Incarnation MCCLV, the first year of the pontificate of the Lord Alexander;[180] to the praise of our Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth world without end. Amen.



SEAL OF THE MONASTERY OF S. CHIARA, ASSISI, 1255 - 1899.

APPENDICES

I

THE RULE OF ST. CLARE

IN THE absence of any English version of the Rule of St. Clare which conforms to the original document, it seemed worth while to append one to the present translation of her contemporary biography. The early history of this Rule is not without its interest, but it is thorny in the extreme and could be made intelligible within no narrow limits.[181] Suffice it to say that during the lifetime of St. Clare—and our concern here is with that period only—one may distinguish several stages in the evolution of her Rule. To begin with, St. Francis gave a short *formula vitæ* to St. Clare and her early companions at S. Damiano in or about 1212.[182] That these Damianites were still without any formal or written Rule when the Camaldolese nuns of Vallegloria near Spello embraced their mode of life several years later, is clear from documents still extant in the archive of the Clares at Vallegloria. While St. Francis was in the Orient (1219-1220), Cardinal Ugolino, afterward Gregory IX, then Bishop of Ostia and Protector of the Order, drew up a written Rule for the Clares,

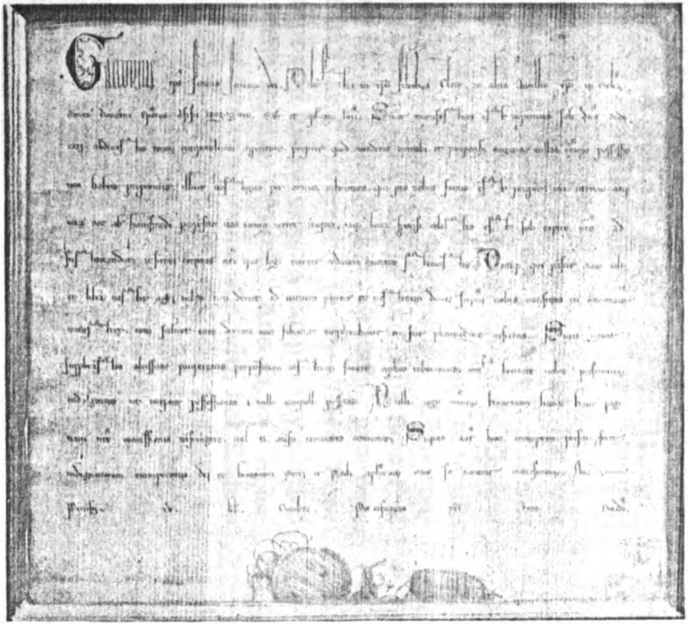
taking as a basis the Rule of St. Benedict [183] and adding some particular constitutions to this Rule, which was duly confirmed by Honorius III,[184] and adopted by the Clares at Monticello near Florence, and elsewhere. But there is no good reason to believe that it was ever put into practice at S. Damiano or that Clare and her companions there ever deviated from the primitive prescriptions of St. Francis. Moreover, St. Clare obtained from Gregory IX in 1228 the celebrated *Privilegium Paupertatis* which is reproduced elsewhere in this volume [185] and which may be regarded in some sort as a corrective of his Rule of 1219. This quasi-Benedictine Rule of 1219 was, however, confirmed by Gregory in 1239,[186] as well as by his successor, Innocent IV, six years later.[187] Finally, 9 August, 1253, the latter Pontiff, at the instance of Cardinal Rainaldo, then Bishop of Ostia and Protector of the Order, solemnly approved, [188] to the exclusion of all former ones, a new and truly Franciscan Rule which the Cardinal had drawn up on 16 September, 1252, for the Poor Ladies.[189] This definitive Rule of St. Clare is the one here translated. It is largely an adaptation, *mutatis mutandis*, of the Rule of the Friars Minor approved in 1223, and Cardinal Rainaldo, afterward Alexander IV, may be regarded as its principal author. But that St. Clare herself had a hand in its compilation is clear from those passages in which,

as in Chapter VI, the impersonal style of the legislator is abandoned, and as a whole it was assuredly drawn up under her auspices. In any event historical research has now made it clear that St. Francis had no share whatever in its composition.[190] Neither did he write any Rule for St. Clare in 1224 as some biographers have erroneously asserted. Aside from the short formula written for the first nuns at S. Damiano at the beginning of their religious life, St. Francis gave no Rule of any kind to St. Clare or her spiritual daughters. It is perhaps somewhat hard for our present-day Clares to bring themselves to believe this. But the fact is beyond gainsay.

The original Bull of Innocent IV confirming this definitive Rule of St. Clare was found at the Monastery of S. Chiara at Assisi in 1893 under circumstances already described,[191] and it is now ensconsed in a reliquary in the nuns' choir there. I have elsewhere described this precious heirloom at some length.[192] Here it may be worth mention that on the upper margin of the faded and crumpled parchment it is possible after an effort to decipher these words: "*Ad instar fiat. S.,*" and below them these others: "*Ex causis manifestis michi et protectori mon [asterii?] fiat ad instar.*" According to the Abbot Cozza-Luzzi, both these inscriptions are in the handwriting of Innocent IV,[193] who wished to hurry the Bull to the dying

Saint. After it reached her, Clare intoned her *Nunc dimittis;* she died the next day. On the reverse of the parchment a contemporary hand has made this touching note: "*Hanc (?) beata Clara tetigit et obsculata est pro devotione pluribu (s et?) pluribus vicibus,*" and it is said that when Clare expired this Bull was clasped in her hands.[194]

It is from this selfsame Bull—of which I obtained a photograph at S. Chiara—that the following translation is made. The numbering of the chapters and their headings, which are not found in the original, are taken from the Quaracchi edition of the Latin text.[195] Apart from the interest attaching to it in connexion with the subject of the present volume, the Rule of St. Clare is most valuable in itself as a specimen of medieval monastic legislation, and those who know anything about religious communities in our very different days cannot fail to recognize the wisdom and far-sightedness that pervade this old-fashioned document.



Bull of Gregory IX (dated 1228) known as the "Privilegium Paupertatis"

THE RULE AND LIFE OF THE POOR SISTERS

I. OF THE EVANGELICAL RULE AND OF CATHOLIC AND SERAPHIC OBEDIENCE

THE form of life of the Order of the Poor Sisters, which the Blessed Francis founded is this: to observe the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by living in obedience, with poverty and in chastity. Clare, unworthy handmaid of Christ and little flower of the most blessed Father Francis, promises obedience and reverence to the Lord Pope Innocent and his successors canonically elected and to the Roman Church. And as, in the beginning of her conversion, she with her Sisters promised obedience to the Blessed Francis, so does she promise to observe the same inviolably to his successors. And the other Sisters are bound always to obey the successors of the Blessed Francis and of Sister Clare and the other Abbesses canonically elected who shall succeed her.

II. OF SISTERS ABOUT TO ENTER THE MONASTERY

IF ANY one, moved by Divine inspiration, should come to us wishing to embrace this life, the Abbess is bound to ask the consent of all the Sisters, and if the greater part give their consent, she may receive her, having obtained leave of our Lord Cardinal Protector. And if it shall seem fitting to receive her, let the Abbess examine her carefully or have her examined as to the Catholic faith and the Sacraments of the Church; and if she believe all these things and is willing to confess them faithfully and to observe them steadfastly to the end, and if she have no husband or, having one, if he have already entered Religion with the authority of the Bishop of the diocese and have made a vow of continence, and if there be no impediment to the observance of this life by reason of her advanced age or ill-health or fatuity, let the tenor of our life be clearly explained to her. If she be found worthy, let the words of the holy Gospel be said to her that she go and sell all that she has and endeavor to distribute it to the poor,[196] but if she cannot do this her good will is sufficient. Let

the Abbess and her Sisters take care not to be anxious about her worldly goods, so that she may freely do with her goods whatsoever the Lord may inspire her. If, however, there be need of advice, let them send her to some prudent and God-fearing men by whose counsel let her goods be distributed to the poor.

Afterward, her hair having been cut off round and her secular dress laid aside, let them allow her three tunics and a mantle. Thenceforth it shall not be permitted her to go outside the monastery save for some useful, reasonable, manifest and probable cause. When the year of probation is over, she shall be received to obedience, promising to observe perpetually our life and form of poverty. No one shall be veiled during the time of probation. The Sisters may also have little mantles for the convenience and propriety of their service and labor. But let the Abbess provide them discreetly with garments according to the qualities of persons and places and times and cold climates as necessity may seem to require. The young girls who are received into the monastery before they have reached the proper age, shall have their hair cut off round and, their secular dress being laid aside, they shall be clothed in religious garb of such sort as may seem befitting to the Abbess. But when they have reached the proper age they shall make their profession clothed after the manner of

the others. And both for these and for the other novices the Abbess shall be careful to provide a mistress from among all those who are the more prudent who shall diligently instruct them in holy living and becoming behavior according to the form of our profession. The same form shall be followed in the examination and reception of the Sisters who serve outside the monastery; these Sisters may wear shoes. No one may live with us in the monastery unless she be received according to the form of our profession. And for the love of the most holy and most sweet Child Jesus wrapped in poor little swaddling clothes and laid in a manger and of His most holy Mother, I admonish, beseech and entreat my Sisters that they be always clothed in poor garments.

III. OF THE DIVINE OFFICE; OF FASTING; OF CONFESSION AND COMMUNION

THE Sisters who know how to read shall recite the Divine Office after the custom of the Friars Minor; wherefore they may have breviaries,[197] reading it [the Office] without singing. And those who are unable at times, owing to a reasonable cause, to recite their hours by reading them may say the Pater Nosters like the other Sisters.[198] Those who do not know how to read shall say twenty-four Pater Nosters for Matins, five for Lauds, seven for each of the hours—Prime, Terce, Sext and None—twelve for Vespers and seven for Compline. They shall also say seven Pater Nosters for the dead at Vespers and twelve at Matins, since the Sisters who are able to read are bound to recite the Office of the Dead. When any Sister of our monastery departs this life they shall say fifty Pater Nosters.

The Sisters shall fast at all times. They may, however, take two repasts at Christmas on whatsoever day it may fall. The Abbess may charitably dispense as regards the young, the weak and those who serve outside the mon-

astery, as she may deem wise. But in time of evident need the Sisters are not bound to bodily fasting. The Sisters, with the leave of the Abbess, shall confess at least twelve times in the year and at such times they should be careful not to introduce any words which do not regard Confession and the salvation of souls. They shall communicate seven times, namely, on the Nativity of the Lord, on Thursday of Holy Week, on Easter Sunday, on Whit Sunday, on the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, on the feast of St. Francis and on the feast of All Saints. The chaplain may enter within [the monastery] to communicate either the Sisters who are in good health or those who are ill.

IV. OF THE ELECTION OF THE ABBESS; OF THE CHAPTER, AND OF THE OFFICIALS AND THE DISCREETS

IN THE election of the Abbess the Sisters are obliged to observe the canonical form. They shall make haste to have [present] the Minister General or a Provincial of the Order of Friars Minor who with the Word of God may dispose them to perfect concord and to seek only the common good in the election. No one shall be elected who is not professed; and if one should be elected or otherwise chosen who is not professed let the Sisters not obey her unless she first professes the form of our Poverty. When she dies, the election of another Abbess shall take place. If at any time it shall seem to all the Sisters that the aforesaid [Abbess] does not suffice for their service and their common good, the aforesaid Sisters are bound as soon as they can to elect another as Abbess and Mother for themselves according to the form above mentioned. Let her who is elected consider of what sort the burden is she has taken upon her and to Whom an account of the flock committed to her is to

be rendered. Let her strive to precede the others in virtue and holy behavior rather than by her office, so that the Sisters, animated by her example, may obey her more through love than through fear. Let her be free from particular friendships, lest by showing too much affection for one she engender scandal among all. Let her console the sorrowful and be the last refuge of the troubled, lest the weak, if they find not comfort at her hands, be overcome by the sadness of despair. Let her conform to the common life in all things, more especially in the church, dormitory, refectory, infirmary, and in clothing; and her Vicar shall also be obliged to do likewise. At least once a week the Abbess is bound to assemble her Sisters at Chapter, where she, as well as the Sisters, ought humbly to confess their ordinary and public faults and negligences. And the Abbess should there confer with all her Sisters as to those things that have to do with the welfare and good name of the monastery, for the Lord often reveals to the least that which is best. Let no grave debt be made save with the consent of all the Sisters and for a manifest necessity and then through a procurator. Let the Abbess with her Sisters be careful not to receive any deposit in their monastery, because disturbance and scandals often arise from so doing. In order to preserve the bond of mutual love and peace, all the officials of the

monastery shall be elected by the common consent of all the Sisters. And in like manner at least eight Sisters shall be elected from among the more prudent, of whom the Abbess is bound always to take counsel as to those things which our form of life requires. Moreover, the Sisters may and they ought sometimes, if it shall be useful and expedient to them, to remove the officials and the discreets and to elect others in their place.

V. OF SILENCE AND OF THE PARLOR AND THE GRILLE

THE Sisters shall keep silence from the hour of Compline until Terce, except those who serve outside the monastery. They shall also keep silence continually in the church, dormitory and refectory. In the infirmary, however, they may always speak discreetly for the recreation and assistance of those who are ill. Moreover, they may always and in all places say what is needful in a low voice. The Sisters are not allowed to speak in the parlor or at the grille without the leave of the Abbess or her Vicar. Those who have leave to speak in the parlor may not do so save in the presence and hearing of two Sisters. But let none presume to go to the grille unless there be present at least three Sisters appointed by the Abbess or her Vicar from among the eight discreets chosen by all the Sisters for the Council of the Abbess. The Abbess and her Vicar are themselves bound to observe this manner of speaking. And let this be done very rarely at the grille; at the door let it never occur. Inside the grille a curtain must be placed, and it must never be removed

save when the Word of God is being spoken or when a Sister speaks to somebody. It must also have a wooden door well fastened with two distinct iron locks, bolts and bars, and these shall be locked, particularly at night, with two keys, of which the Abbess shall keep one and the Sacristan the other. And the grille shall be kept always locked except when the Divine Office is being recited and for the reasons mentioned above. No Sister may in any way speak to any person at the grille before sunrise or after sunset. In the parlor a curtain shall always remain within and it may not be removed. No one may speak in the parlor during the Lent of St. Martin or during the greater Lent, save to the priest for confession or for some other evident necessity. which must be left to the discretion of the Abbess or her Vicar.

VI. OF THE SERAPHIC INSTITUTION OF THE SECOND ORDER AND OF THE PROMISED PRIVATION OF POSSESSIONS [199]

AFTER the Heavenly Father Most High deigned to enlighten my heart by His grace to do penance according to the example and teaching of our most blessed Father St. Francis, I, together with my Sisters, voluntarily promised him obedience a little while after his conversion. Seeing that we feared no poverty, toil, sorrow, humiliation or contempt from the world, nay, rather that we held them in great delight, the Blessed Father wrote us a form of life as follows: "Since by Divine inspiration you have made yourselves daughters and handmaids of the Most High Sovereign King, the Heavenly Father, and have espoused yourselves to the Holy Ghost, electing to live according to the perfection of the holy Gospel, I will and I promise for myself and my Friars always to have for you as for them a special solicitude." This promise he faithfully kept so long as he lived and he wished it always to be kept by the Friars. And in order that neither we nor those who


ticis sacri corpus ad ciuitatē assisij detulert. ¶ Transe
untes uō p eccām sc̄i damiani ī qua uirgo illa nobilis
clara nūc gliosa ī celis tūc īclusa cū uirgibꝫ morabat̄:
ibiqꝫ aliq̄ntulū subsistentes. sacrū corpꝰ margaritis cele
stibꝫ insignitū. uidendū et osculādum sacris illis uirgi
nibus optulerūt. Peruenientes dēniqꝫ ad ciuitatem
cum iubilo: p̄ciosum thesaurū quē portabāt ī eccā sc̄i

Saint Clare kissing the Stigmata of Saint Francis after his Death

From an early Franciscan MS.

were to come after us might ever fall away from the highest poverty with which we had begun, he again wrote us shortly before his death his last wish, saying: "I, little Brother Francis, wish to follow the life and poverty of Jesus Christ, our Lord Most High, and of His most holy Mother and to persevere therein until the end. And I beseech you all, my Ladies, and counsel you always to live in this highest life and poverty. And watch yourselves well, lest through the teaching or advice of anybody you ever depart from it in anywise." And as I myself together with my Sisters have ever been careful to observe the holy poverty which we promised to the Lord God and to the Blessed Francis, so likewise the Abbesses who shall succeed me in office and all the Sisters are inviolably bound to observe it to the end, namely, by not receiving or having any possession or propriety either of themselves or through any intermediary person or even anything that might reasonably be called propriety, except so much ground as necessity requires for the decency and seclusion of the monastery, and this ground may not be tilled save as a garden for the wants of the Sisters.

VII. OF WORK AND OF ALMS

LET the Sisters, to whom the Lord has given the grace of working, labor faithfully and devotedly after the hour of Terce in such works as are becoming and conducive to the common good and in such a way that, while idleness, the enemy of the soul, is banished, they may not quench the spirit of holy prayer and devotion, to which other temporal things should be subservient. And the Abbess or her Vicar is bound to assign to each her manual labor and this at the Chapter in the presence of all. Let the same be done if any alms be sent by any person for the needs of the Sisters so that a recommendation may be made for them in common.[200] And let all these things be distributed for the common good by the Abbess or her Vicar with the advice of the discreets.

VIII. OF EVANGELICAL MENDICITY AND OF POVERTY IN PARTICULAR: ALSO OF THE SISTERS WHO ARE ILL

THE Sisters shall not appropriate anything to themselves, neither a house nor a place nor anything; and as strangers and pilgrims in this world, serving the Lord in poverty and humility, let them send for alms with confidence. Nor ought they to be ashamed [of so doing] since the Lord made Himself poor in this world for our sake. This is that height of the most exalted poverty which has made you, my dearest Sisters, heiresses and queens of the heavenly kingdom, which had rendered you poor in things but enriched you with virtues. Let that be your portion which leads to the land of the living; to it, dearest Sisters, cleave with all your might for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ and His most holy Mother, never wishing to possess anything else under heaven. It is not allowable for any Sister to send letters or to receive anything or to give [anything] out of the monastery without the leave of the Abbess. Nor is it allowed to have anything which the

Abbess has not given or permitted. If anything be sent [to a Sister] by her relations or by others, let the Abbess give it to her and she may use it if she need it: if not, let her charitably give it to some Sister who may be in want of it. If, however, any money be sent to her, let the Abbess, with the advice of the discreets, make provision for the Sister as regards those things she may need.

As to the Sisters who are ill, the Abbess is strictly bound either by herself or by other Sisters to make solicitous inquiry as well in respect of counsel as of food and of other necessaries which their infirmity requires, and to provide for them charitably and compassionately according to the possibility of the place. For all are obliged to serve and care for their Sisters who are ill even as they would wish to be treated if taken down by any illness themselves. Let each one disclose with confidence her needs to another. And if a mother love and nurture her daughter according to the flesh, how much the more ought a Sister to love and nurture her Sister according to the Spirit. Those who are ill may lie on sacks filled with straw and may have feather pillows for their heads. And those who need them may use woolen socks and mattresses. The aforesaid Sisters who are ill may, when they are visited by those who enter the monastery, answer each one speaking any good words to

them. But the other Sisters who have leave [to speak] must not presume to speak to those entering the monastery except in the presence and hearing of two discreets appointed by the Abbess or by her Vicar. The Abbess and her Vicar are obliged to observe this way of speaking themselves.

IX. OF THE PENANCE TO BE IMPOSED ON SISTERS AND OF THE SISTERS SERVING OUTSIDE THE MONASTERY

IF, AT the instigation of the enemy, any Sister sin grievously against the form of our profession and, being admonished two or three times by the Abbess or the other Sisters, will not amend, she shall in the presence of all the Sisters eat bread and water on the floor in the refectory for as many days as she continues obstinate, and she shall undergo greater punishment if the Abbess deem it advisable. Meanwhile, so long as she is obstinate let them pray that God may touch her heart to do penance. But let the Abbess and her Sisters take heed not to be angry or worried over the sin of anybody, because anger and worry hinder charity in themselves and in others. If it should happen (which God forbid) that trouble or scandal should arise between Sister and Sister, let her who was the cause of the trouble, at once before she offers the gift of her prayer to the Lord, not only prostrate herself humbly at the feet of the other, but let her also entreat her in all simplicity to intercede for

her with the Lord that He may forgive her. But let the other one, mindful of that word of the Lord: Unless you forgive from the heart neither will your Heavenly Father, forgive you,* freely pardon her Sister all wrong she may have done her.

The Sisters who serve outside the monastery shall not tarry long unless some reason of evident need require it. And let them behave modestly and speak little so that they may always edify those who see them. And they must carefully avoid all suspicious meetings and conferences with men. They may not be godmothers either of men or of women lest talk or trouble might thereby arise. Let them not dare to carry the news of the world within the monastery. And they are strictly obliged not to repeat outside the monastery anything that is said or done within which might occasion any scandal. If any one through simplicity should offend in these two things it is left to the prudence of the Abbess to charitably impose penance on her. If, however, she do this through a bad habit, let the Abbess with the advice of the discreets enjoin penance on her proportionate to the fault.

* An allusion to Matt. 6:15.

X. OF THE VISITATION OF THE ABBESS AND OF THE OBEDIENCE OF THE SISTERS; ALSO OF VICES AND VIRTUES

THE Abbess shall admonish and visit her Sisters and shall correct them humbly and in charity, not commanding them anything which may be against their conscience and the form of our profession. But let the Sisters who are subject remember that for God's sake they have given up their own wills. Wherefore, they are strictly obliged to obey their Abbesses in all those things that they have promised the Lord to observe and that are not against their conscience and our profession. The Abbess, however, must behave so affably toward them that they may say and act toward her as mistresses toward their handmaid, for it ought so to be that the Abbess is the handmaid of all the Sisters.

I admonish and entreat the Sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they beware of all pride, vainglory, envy, covetousness, of all care and anxiety as to this world, of all detraction and murmuring, dissension and division. Let them be ever solicitous to maintain among

themselves that oneness of mutual charity which is the bond of perfection.* And those who do not know how to read should not wish to learn, but let them consider that they ought to desire above all to possess the spirit of the Lord and His holy working, to pray always to Him with a clean heart, to have humility and patience in the time of trial and weakness and to love those who persecute, blame and accuse us, because the Lord has said, "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "But he that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved."†

* An allusion to Coloss. 3:14.
† See Matt. 5:10, and 10:22.

XI. OF THE PORTRESS AND OF THE DOOR; ALSO OF ENTRY INTO THE MONASTERY

THE portress should be of mature manners and discreet and should be of a suitable age. During the day she shall remain at the entry in a small open cell without a door. And let a worthy companion be given her who, when it is necessary, may be able to replace her in all things. The door must be fastened as strongly as possible with two distinct iron locks, bars and bolts. Let it be locked, more especially at night, with two keys, of which the portress shall have one and the Abbess the other. During the day it must not be left without a guard on any account, and it shall be securely locked with one key. Let them take the utmost care and make sure that at no time the door be left open, save when this can hardly be avoided becomingly. Nor shall it be opened entirely to anybody wishing to enter, except to such as have been given permission by the Sovereign Pontiff or by our Lord Cardinal. The Sisters shall not allow any one to enter the monastery before sunrise nor to remain within after sunset unless a clear,

reasonable and inevitable reason urges. If any Bishop have leave to celebrate Mass within, whether for the blessing of an Abbess or for the profession of any Sister as a Nun or for any other reason, let him be satisfied with as few and as virtuous companions and attendants as may be. Whenever it is necessary for any persons to enter [the monastery] to do some work, let the Abbess be careful to place a proper person at the door who shall open it only to those appointed and to no others. Let the Sisters be most sedulously on their guard lest they been seen by those who enter.

XII. OF THE VISITOR, OF THE CHAPLAIN AND HIS COMPANIONS, AND OF THE CARDINAL PROTECTOR

OUR Visitor shall always belong to the Order of Friars Minor according to the will and mandate of our Cardinal. And let him be such that his integrity and character be well known. His office shall be to correct in the head as well as in the members the excesses committed against the form of our profession. Being in an open place, so that he may be seen by others, he may speak with several or singly [with each one] about those things which pertain to the work of the visitation, according as he may deem most expedient. A Chaplain with one companion, a cleric of good fame and tried discretion, and two lay brothers of holy life and lovers of virtue to assist us in our poverty, such as we have always had through the compassion of the aforesaid Order of Friars Minor, we ask as a favor of the same Order for the love of God and of the Blessed Francis. The Chaplain may not enter the monastery without a companion. And when they enter they must stay in an open place so that they may always be seen by each other

and by others. It shall be lawful for them to enter for the confessions of those who are unable through illness to go to the parlor, to communicate the same, for Extreme Unction, and to assist the dying. For funerals and solemn Masses for the dead, for digging, opening or even preparing graves, those who are worthy may enter in suitable number at the discretion of the Abbess. In fine, the Sisters are strictly obliged always to have that one of the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church as our Governor, Protector and Corrector, who has been appointed by the Lord Pope for the Friars Minor, to the end that ever submissive and subject at the feet of the same holy Church, steadfast in the Catholic faith, we may observe perpetually the poverty and humility of our Lord Jesus Christ and of His most holy Mother and the holy Gospel which we have solemnly promised. Amen.



CLARES IN CHOIR
From a Miniature in a XIV Century MS.

NOTES

II.

NOTES

1. See *Speculum Perfectionis,* Ed. Sabatier (Paris, 1898), X—108, p. 214.

2. Only the day before her death did St. Clare succeed in obtaining the Papal Bull in which the Poverty Francis had sought and taught was sanctioned in all its pristine purity.

3. See her Rule—Ch. I in Appendix.

4. See *Legenda Major S. Francisci* (Ed. Quaracchi, 1898), p. 37.

5. "There is no translation of the Life of St. Clare," writes Prof. A. G. Little, "nor of the Rule of her Order." *Franciscan Literature for English Readers,* London, 1904.

6. See "The Personality of Clare of Assisi," by the late Sir Home Gordon, Bart., in the *Oxford and Cambridge Review* (London, Constable), No. 5, 1908, Michaelmas Term, pp. 23 *ff.*

7. It can no longer be concealed that the pretty story told in the *Fioretti* as to how St. Clare and St. Francis ate together at the Porziuncola, is—like many others of that ilk—wholly devoid of historic foundation. It is surely a pity to have to acknowledge this fact, but the demands of truth are imperative.

8. "Scripsit nobis formam vivendi . . . et plura scripta nobis tradidit." Testamentum B. Clarae, *Seraph. Legislat. Textus Originales* (Quaracchi, 1897), p. 276.

9. These lines owe their preservation to the fact that St. Clare inserted them in the definitive Rule of her Order, confirmed the day before she died. (See p. 110.)

10. See *Spec. Perfectionis* (Ed. Sabatier), p. 180 and p. 215.

11. More than a half-century ago Professor Vincenzo Locatelli made a fruitless search for these documents. See his *Vita di S. Chiara* (Assisi, 1854), p. 131.

12. Under this title the authorities of the Order appear to have comprised a collection of the primitive biographies of St. Francis, as opposed to the "New Legend" composed by St. Bonaventure in 1263.

13. The text of this decree is as follows: "Praecipit Generale Capitulum per obedientiam quod omnes legendae de beato Francisco olim factae deleantur et, ubi inveniri poterunt extra ordinem, ipsas fratres studeant amovere," etc. See Ehrle "Die ältesten Redactionen der Generalconstitutionen des Franziskanerordens" in *Archiv. für Litt. und Kirchengeschichte* (1892), p. 39; also Little, "Decrees of the Chapters General of the Friars Minor 1260-1282" in *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, t. XIII (1898), pp. 704-8.

14. Its aim was no doubt the controversy then ravaging the Order as to the observance of the Rule, but see Van Ortroy, S. J., in *Anal. Boll.*, t. XVIII, p. 174; Lemmens, *Doc. Ant. Franciscana*, pars II, p. 11; Ed. d'Alençon in *Etudes Franciscaines*, t. I, p. 656; Faloci in *Misc. Franc.*, t. VII, p. 159; Little in *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, Oct., 1902, p. 651.

15. Ubertino's testimony on this point may be found in his remarkable book, *Arbor Vitae Crucifixae Jesu*, which he composed on Mount La Verna in 1305. See the edition printed at Venice, 1485, lib. V, c. 5, fol. E III r. a.

16. *Arbor Vitae* l. c.

17. The same is true, as a whole, of the other early monasteries of the Clares I have visited at Spello, Foligno, Perugia and elsewhere.

18. I am glad of this opportunity to express my gratitude anew to His Eminence Cardinal Cassetta, Protector of the Monastery, for according me this rather unusual favor so promptly and so courteously; to Father Michael Bihl, O. F. M., for the invaluable assistance he rendered me on this

occasion as on so many others, and to the Abbess Mother Carmela Cherubina for the cordiality and discernment with which she lightened the labor of examining and cataloguing the archive.

19. Among these is an exquisite alb made by St. Clare for St. Francis, and which attracted much attention at the Mostra d'Arte Umbra, Perugia, 1907. Since then it has been placed, together with the Breviary, in a closed reliquary above the altar at S. Chiara, quite out of sight and reach!

20. This precious relic, which has been described at length by P. Ed. d'Alençon (*De Breviario S. Francisci,* Rome 1898), is not to be confounded with another Breviary preserved at S. Damiano and which is said to have been written for St. Clare by Leo himself. On this second Breviary, see Cholat, "Le Breviaire de Sainte Claire," in *Opuscules de Critique Historique*, fasc. viii (Paris, Oct., 1903).

21. I have elsewhere published a list of them: See the "Inventarium omnium documentorum quae in archivo Proto-Monasterii S. Clarae Assisiensis nunc asservantur," in the *Arch. Fran. Hist.*, an. I (1908), fasc. II—III, pp. 413-432.

22. See *Annales* ad. an. 1238, nn. XIV—XV (t. III, p. 13).

23. Instrumenti e Bolle ecc. dall'anno 963 sino all 1646 copiate dall'archivio della Cattedrale di S. Rufino dal Cav. Francesc' Antonio Frondini (1795).

24. Four charming letters to Blessed Agnes, Princess of Bohemia, who founded a monastery of the Clares at Prague, are all that remain to us. They are given by the Bollandists, *Acta SS.*, Martii I, pp. 505-507.

25. It may be found in the *Seraphicae Legislationis Textus Originales*, pp. 273-280.

26. These Papal documents are printed in the *Bullarium Franciscanum* of Sbaralea, tt. I and II, passim.

27. Edited by the Bollandists, *Acta SS.*, Aug. II, (12 Aug.), pp. 754-767.

28. For a detailed discussion of the critical questions connected with the Sources of the history of St. Clare, readers are referred to an article on this subject by the present writer in the *Archiv. Franc. Hist.*, an. III, fasc. 2.

29. See p. 91.

30. L. c., p. 741.

31. *Opera Omnia S. Bonav.* t. VIII (Quaracchi, 1898) p. CXVI.

32. See, for example, Van Ortroy in *Anal. Bolland.*, t. XXII (1903), p. 360; Faloci in *Miscell. Frances.*, Vol. VII fasc. V (1899), pp. 157-8; E. d'Alençon, *S. Francisci Vita et Miracula, etc., Auctore Fr. Thoma de Celano* (Rome, Desclée, 1906), p. XLVI; Lemmens, *Catalogus Sanctorum Fratrum Minorum* (Rome, typis Sallustianis, 1903), p. XV and passim; Sabatier, *Speculum Perfect.*, cit., p. LXXXV; De Kerval in *Bullet. Critico*, etc., an. I (1905), p. 4, etc.

33. *Die Quellen zur Geschichte des hl. Franz von Assisi* (Gotha, Perthes, 1904), pp. 240-243.

34. *Chronica Fratris Jordani*, ed. Boehmer in *Collection d'Etudes et de documents*, t. VI (Paris, 1908), n. 19, pp. 22 *ff*.

35. These three works have been edited with a wealth of critical apparatus by the present archivist general of the Capuchins. See *S. Francisci Assisiensis Vita*, cit., note 32. There is an English version based on this edition—The Lives of S. Francis of Assisi, by Brother Thomas of Celano; translated by A. G. Ferrers Howell (London, Methuen, 1908), pp. XXIV-360.

36. For an excellent summary of the whole question see Dubois: "Thomas of Celano, the Historian of St. Francis" in *Cath. University Bulletin*, Vol. XIII, No. 2 (April 1907), pp. 250-268.

37. They are included in d'Alençon's edition of his works cited above, pp. 446-451.

38. See Clop, "La Prose 'Dies Irae' et l'Ordre des Frères Mineurs" in *Revue du Chant Grégorien*, XVI

(1907), pp. 45-53; and Henry: "Dies Irae" in *Cath. Encyclopedia,* t. IV, pp. 787-788.

39. MS. Magliabechi cl. XXXVIII, No. 135.

40. See "Il Codice Magliabecchiano della storia di S. Chiara" in *Bollettino della Società Umbra di Storia Patria,* tom. I (Perugia, 1895), pp. 417-426.

41. See his *Notizie sicure della morte, sepoltura, canonizzazione e translazione di S. Francesco* (Florence, 1822), p. 128.

42. *Storia di S. Francesco,* lib. 2 (Foligno, 1827), p. 236.

43. The fact that the writer refers to St. Clare in the Prologue as "our glorious mother" might perhaps point to a Poor Clare as the scribe.

44. MS., page 2.

45. See the critique of Cozza-Luzzi's article in *Analecta Bolland.,* XV (1896), pp. 100-101.

46. *S. Francisci Vita,* etc., cit., p. xlvii, n. 2.

47. "Et haec ad praesens de virginibus Deo dicatis et devotissimis ancillis Christi dicta sufficiant, cum ipsarum vita mirifica et institutio gloriosa . . . proprium opus requirat et otium," I Cel., ed. d'Alençon, § 20, p. 23.

48. See Sbaralea, *Supplementum* (Rome, 1806), p. 674; Ed d'Alençon, l. c., pp. XVIII-XIX. The date of his death is unknown. He was buried at S. Giovanni, but, after the abandonment of the monastery toward the close of the fifteenth century, his remains were transferred to the Church of San Francesco at Tagliacozzo, where I have recently seen them exposed for veneration under the high altar.

49. For example, in our present Life of St. Clare (see above, p. 26), he says that Innocent III first approved the Rule of the Clares, whereas in his "First Life" of St. Francis (I *Cel.* § 20) he attributes this approval to Gregory IX. But see above, p. xxviii.

50. His own words read like a disclaimer of personal knowledge. See Prologue, p. 4.

51. See p. 4.

52. See p. 90.

53. This writer tells us that the life of St. Clare was first described by Messer Bartholomew, Bishop of Spoleto, and that "altre cose notabile furone da alcuni fratri inscritte da essa Beata." See Cozza-Luzzi, l. c., p. 420.

54. Rufino, Clare's cousin, Angelo, Leo, Giles, Juniper and other companions of St. Francis who had known Clare, were still alive, besides many of the nuns who had lived with her.

55. See p. 74. In like manner Celano tells us in his "Second Life" that St. Francis received the Stigmata "soon after" (*paulo post*) he heard the voice from the crucifix at San Damiano, an event which took place eighteen years earlier! See II *Cel.*, § ii.

56. See on this question Grisar, *Church History and the Critical Spirit* (London, 1901), p. 10.

57. See p. 75.

58. See p. 89.

59. See p. 5.

60. See p. 26.

61. See p. 36.

62. See p. 42.

63. This combination of strength and tenderness is very strikingly portrayed in the Vivarini's picture of St. Clare in the Academy of Venice. (On this picture see Salter, *Franciscan Legends in Italian Art* (London, Dent.; New York, Dutton, 1905), p. 191.

64. "Erat columna nostra," she says in her will, "unica consolatio post Deum et firmamentum." See Testamentum B. Clarae, l. c., p. 276.

65. Perhaps the best known of these lives are those of Giuseppe da Madrid (Rome, 1832), Locatelli (Assisi, 1854), Demore (Paris, 1856: new German translation by Schmid, Ratisbon, 1905), Ricard (Paris, 1895), etc. None of these works has been translated. It is perhaps stranger still that there should be no English life of St. Clare at all. The work entitled *St. Clare, St. Colette, and the Poor Clares,*

by a Religious of the Order of the Poor Clares (Dublin, Fowler, 1864, pp. xii-370) contains a good sketch of St. Clare, but it is unfortunately extremely rare, and, therefore, little known. I am indebted to Fr. Thaddeus Hermans, O. F. M., for procuring me a copy of it. There is also a sketch of St. Clare in *The Lives of the Saints and Blessed of the Three Orders of St. Francis*, Vol. II (Taunton, 1886), pp. 557-578; but this work is likewise very scarce.

66. *Sainte Claire d'Assise,* Paris, Poussielgue, 1902, pp. xiv—253.

67. *Histoire abrégée de l'Ordre de Sainte Claire d'Assise,* Lyons, Desclée, 1906, 2 vols., pp. xxiv—412, and ii—574.

68. *Vita di S. Francesco* (Foligno, 1827), lib. II, cap. XV, art. 1.

69. *Vie de S. François,* 18 ed. (Paris, 1896), p. XXXIX.

70. *Inventario dell' antica biblioteca del Sacro Convento di S. Francesco di Assisi compilato nel 1381,* etc. Assisi, (1906, Tip. Metastasio, pp. xlv—270). See pp. 166 *ff.*

71. The first part of this versified version has been published by Filippo Sensi, "Leggenda Latina Versificata del secolo XIII intorno a S. Chiara di Assisi" in *Bollettino della Società Umbra di Storia Patria,* vol. I (Perugia, 1895), pp. 114-125. The latter part of the poem is illegible; at least Prof. Leto Alessandri tells me he cannot read it, and where he has failed, who may hope to succeed?

72. See *Legenda Aurea,* ed. Graesse (Leipzig, 1850), pp. 949-950.

73. See *De Conformitate,* etc., Liber I in *Analecta Francis.,* t. IV (Quaracchi, 1906), pp. 351-357.

74. *De Probatis Sanctorum Vitis,* R. P. Fr. Laurentius Surius Carthusiae Coloniensis primum edit., etc., t. IV, pp. 609-626 (Edit. of 1579, t. IV, pp. 634-650; edit. of 1618, t. VIII, pp. 106-114; edit. of 1877, t. VIII, pp. 269-271).

75. *Historia Seraphica a F. Henrico Sedulio concinnata,* Antverpiae, Sumptibus Haeredum Martini Nutii, MDCXIII, pp. 526-544.

76. See *Acta SS.*, t. II, Aug. ed., Paris, 1867, pp. 754-767.

77. For details as to these MSS. see *Acta SS.*, l. c.

78. These chapters seem to have lost their way into the Bollandist MS.; they form chapters XV and XXXIII of the *Fioretti*. See above, p. 127, n. 7.

79. See *Legende der glorioser maghet Sinte Clara:* In't licht gegeven door P. Fr. Steph. Schoutens, minderbroeder: Gedrukt te Hoogstraten bij L. Van Hoof-Roelans, MCMIV.

80. See *The Golden Legend,* or Lives of the Saints as Englished by William Caxton, Vol. VI (London, Dent, 1900), p. 161 *ff.* A work cited by Chevalier (*Répertoire des Sources Historiques du Moyen Age,* Vol. I [nouvelle ed., Paris, 1905], p. 935, under the title of *The Life and Rule of St. Claire and Conversion of St. Agnes her Sister,* etc., London, 1622, *ib.*, 1635), I have not been able to find, but I am strongly inclined to believe that this book may have been a reprint of the "8th Booke of the Chronicles of the Frier Minors"—a work drawn from Mark of Lisbon's well-known Chronicle and published at St. Omers in 1618 by John Heigham. A copy of this work, which is exceedingly rare, exists in the Franciscan Convent at Taunton, and it is to the kindness of the Abbess of that Convent, the Rev. Mother Hyacinth, O. S. F., that I am indebted for a description of it.

81. *The Princess of Poverty; St. Clare and the Order of Poor Ladies,* by Fr. Marianus Fiege, O. M. Cap., published by the Poor Clares of the Monastery of St. Clare, Evansville, Ind., 1900.

82. *I. e.,* St. Francis of Assisi and his disciples.

83. Pope Alexander IV, who had canonized St. Clare. While Bishop of Ostia he had been appointed Protector of the Order by Innocent IV.

84. *I. e.,* acts or process of St. Clare's canonization.

85. In its primitive meaning the Legend was the history to be read (*legenda*) on the feast of a Saint; but from the thirteenth century onward the term came to include all

hagiographical narratives. See Delehaye, *The Legends of the Saints.* Translated by Mrs. V. M. Crawford. London: Longmans, Green, 1907, pp. 10-11.

86. Several of these including Rufino, Clare's cousin, Giles, Leo, Angelo and Juniper, were still living, and the three last-named had assisted the dying Saint. See p. 69.

87. *I. e.,* the Poor Clares at the Monastery of S. Damiano.

88. "Admirabilis femina *clara* vocabulo et virtute . . . *claro* satis genere traxit originem," etc. The author here plays on the derivation of the name Clara—clear or shining. He had already done so in his First Life of St. Francis (see I Cel., § 116).

89. Tradition tells us that his name was Favorino, that he was a scion of the noble house of Scifi or Scefi and Lord of Sasso Rosso, a medieval castle of which a few stones may still be seen on one of the southern slopes of Mt. Subasio high up above the old road to Spello. We are not able, *pace* Fr. de Chérancé, to verify this tradition by documents. But it may well be true for all that; we know that a popular tradition of a people like the Assisians may sometimes be more important than any document. On the other hand, it would be idle to deny that there was a period when illustrious birth added so markedly to a person's merit that hagiologists were at pains to make out a patent of nobility in favor of those whose lives they wrote. Nothing, for example, would satisfy certain sixteenth century writers on St. Francis but to invest him with a genealogical tree and a coat of arms. (See *e. g.,* the "Arbor Consanguinitatis B. Francisci," given by Rodulphius—*Historiarum Seraphicae Religionis Libri Tres,* Venice, 1586, lib. I, p. 3.) It is just possible that the pedigree of St. Clare furnished by Locatelli (*Vita di S. Chiara, Assisi,* 1854, p. 334) and reproduced by de Chérancé (*Sainte Claire d'Assise,* Paris, 1902, p. 9) and by Jörgensen (*Saint François d'Assise,* Paris, 1909, p. 185) may owe its origin to this same tendency. In point of

fact, all that is now known concerning the ancestors of St. Clare scarcely suffices to do more than arouse a vain curiosity. The fact that some early legends give her the title of *Domina* (*e. g.,* I Cel., § 116, p. 123; and the present Life, see p. 29) is not of value in itself, but only in so far as it helps to confirm the popular tradition. Beyond doubt Clare was of noble lineage, like her cousin Rufino, one of the famous "Three Companions" of St. Francis ("Frater Rufinus Cipii . . . de nobilioribus civibus Assisi, consanguineus S. Clarae." Chron. XXIV Generalium in *Anal. Francis.*, t. III, p. 46), but her contemporary biographer was so wholly preoccupied with the splendor that radiated from the Saint that he concerned himself very little about her family. That is all we have to consider here.

90. The Latin form, *Hortulana,* may mean a gardener, and I have the hardihood to believe that if our author mentions the name of Clare's mother here, after having omitted that of her father, it is largely because its derivation affords him such a tempting *lusus verborum.* Pope Alexander indulges in the same play on words in the Bull of Clare's Canonization—"optima Hortulana quae in horto dominico protulit talem plantam" (see Sbaralea, l. c., II, p. 82). We are indebted to Bl. Bernardine of Feltria (+1494) for the information that Ortolana's family name was Fiumi.

91. *I. e.,* at the sanctuary of St. Michael on Monte Gargano in Apulia.

92. The font at which St. Clare received this uncommon name, now so popular, is still shown in the Cathedral of S. Rufino at Assisi. Her sister, St. Agnes, as well as St. Francis himself and the Emperor Frederick II, were also baptized there. (See Duff Gordon, *The Story of Assisi.* Third Edition. London: Dent., 1903, p. 299.) 1194 is generally assigned as the year of Clare's birth; according to the MS. Chronicle of Mariano of Florence, she was born 16 July of that year.

93. *Miserorum miserias miserantem*—we have here a

translatable example of our author's practice of verbal alliteration.

94. This was the primitive method of reckoning the number of prayers repeated. Long before St. Clare's time strings of beads were in use for this purpose, and these prayer-beads in the medieval Church Latin were known as Pater Nosters. (See Du Cange, *Glossarium.*) Thus we read that St. Clare in later life gave her Pater Noster to Blessed Agnes of Bohemia. (See *Anal. Francis,* t. iii, p. 183, n. 7.)

95. All Assisi was then ringing with the vagaries of Francis, and it is not unlikely that Clare may have seen him on his way to S. Damiano carrying the stones that were to repair its tottering walls.

96. This confidante of Clare's is thought to have been her aunt Pacifica Guelfucci, who is said by Cristofani (*Storie di Assisi,* 3 ed., Assisi, 1902, p. 92) and others to have assisted the Saint in her subsequent flight from home and to have followed her into the cloister. All honor to her memory, whoever she was!

97. Bartholomew of Pisa, writing about 1389, tells us that Francis, after their first interview, wishing to test Clare's vocation, bade her go from door to door through her native city clothed in sackcloth begging for bread. (See his *Liber de Conformitate* (Quaracchi edition, l. I, 1908), p. 352.) No mention of this is found elsewhere, and although it is just such a test as Francis might have set, it must yet be accepted with some reserve.

98. The prelate here mentioned was undoubtedly Guido II, who governed the diocese of Assisi from 1204 to 1228, and who was the lifelong friend and protector of St. Francis. Stress is laid on this incident because the palm was "an emblem of the victory Clare was about to achieve over the world."

99. There is nothing to identify them; but Clare's aunt Pacifica, already mentioned, appears to have been one of them.

100. A small arched doorway is still pointed out in Assisi, hard by the Piazza S. Chiara, as being according to local tradition the one through which St. Clare took flight from her father's house toward an unknown future. We are told that the doors of the houses of old Assisi used to be walled up for one year after a dead body had been carried out through them, and many vestiges of these "death doors" still remain. The door here referred to may have been a "porta di mortuccio" of this kind, which would have been naturally adapted to the flight of St. Clare, who by this act "died to the old life." (See Goff, *Assisi of St. Francis*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1908, p. 204.) A photograph of the door in question, especially taken for the present volume, is here reproduced.

101. This dramatic scene took place on the night following Palm Sunday, which in 1212 fell on 18 March.

102. Many devout and learned people then believed themselves to be living in the evening of the world—"in vespere mundi tendentis ad occasum."

103. The Latin word *Locus,* or place, used here and elsewhere by our author, is a technical term by which the early Franciscan convents were designated. Situated on a plain below Assisi, the little wayside chapel of St. Mary of the Porziuncola had been donated to Francis about 1211 by the Benedictines of Mount Subasio. Adjoining this humble sanctuary, where his vocation had been revealed to him, the first Franciscan convent was formed by the erection of a few small huts made of wattle, straw and mud. This settlement became the cradle of the Order ("Caput et Mater Ordinis") and the central spot in the life of Francis. (See II Cel., § 18; III Soc., § 56; Bonav. *Leg. Maj.,* II, § 8, and *Spec. Pref.* IV, 55, p. 97.) The little chapel is still there; no longer in the open plain, but standing beneath the dome of the great basilica erected in 1569 by St. Pius V as a protecting enclosure and to accommodate the enormous crowds of pilgrims drawn to Assisi annually by the famous Porziuncola Indulgence of

2 August. One of the large frescoes by Appiani beneath the cupola represents St. Clare here dedicating herself to the service of God.

104. The church and adjoining monastery of S. Paolo here referred to belonged to the Benedictine nuns and was about an hour's walk from the Porziuncola further on in the plain. The monastery no longer exists. It stood on the outskirts of Bastia, near the river Chiagio, and occupied the site of the present "Campo Santo," or burial-ground of Bastia. The old chapel of St. Clare's time is still standing, but the restorations it underwent, after having been partially demolished by earthquake, have sadly deformed it, especially as regards the interior. It is now used as a mortuary chapel. The story of San Paolo is briefly told in the following inscription which I have copied from a slab in the chapel: "Questo edifizio che sino dal seculo XII fù monisterio di vergini Benedittine ove riparò Chiara di Asisi a Cristo novellamente disposata e che poscia ai miserandi tempi di parte guelfa e ghibbelina venne mutato in arnese di guerra dopo V secoli d'ingrato abbandono fù per pietoso consiglio del Popolo di Bastia dato alla sepoltura dei lor cari estinti sindaco di essa terra Giuseppe Angelini MDCCCLXII."

105. There has been some difference of opinion as to the location of this monastery at the time of St. Clare's sojourn there. Fratini (*Biografia di S. Chiara,* Foligno, 1888, p. 14), Le Monnier (*Histoire de S. François,* Paris, Lecoffre, 1891, t. I, p. 230), and others, assert that it then stood within the city gates of Assisi and upon the site of the present diocesan seminary. This view is confirmed by certain early documents I have seen in the archive at S. Chiara. (*Inventarium,* etc., l. c., p. 426, n. 45). But these documents refer to the year 1270, while our author is here concerned with the year 1212. Moreover, the topographical details he gives us about Panso in a later chapter (see p. 42)—the mountain, the brook, the fields and vineyards—point conclusively, as Vincenzo Locatelli remarks

(*Vita di S. Chiara*, Assisi, 1854, pp. 40-41), to a rural monastery. (See, also, Cristofani, op. cit., pp. 34 and 91.) To me it seems highly probable that the Benedictine nuns at S. Angelo, who before 1238 had embraced the Rule of St. Clare, subsequently moved into the city for greater security, just as the Clares at S. Damiano did in 1260. This hypothesis is not only most likely in itself in view of the conditions then prevailing, but it serves to reconcile all apparent contrariety of testimony as to the location of S. Angelo in Panzo. M. Paul Sabatier, who at first held the same opinion as Fratini and Le Monnier (*Vie*, cit., p. 175), has since changed his mind; and it was under his guidance that I visited the original site of the old monastery. It is situated on the declivity of Mount Subasio, nearly midway between the path that leads up to the Carceri and the old road to Spello, and is about forty minutes' walk from Assisi through the Porta Nuova. The monastery disappeared long ago, but part of the old gateway and some traces of the cloister are yet distinguishable in the farm-buildings now known as S. Angelo in Panzo and which have been well described by Mrs. de Selincourt (*Homes of the First Franciscans*, London, Dent, 1905, pp. 106-108.) A stone in what was once the chapel bears this memorial: "D. O. M. Ecclesiam istam dicatam divo Michaeli Archangelo hoc in loco a fundamentis erexit anno 1604 Dux Ferrantes Bonacquisti cum lapidibus vetustissimi, celeberrimi sed diruti templi Sancti Angeli in Panzo ab eodem translatis de commissione Marcelli Crescentii tunc temporis Æpiscopi Asisien. largientis eidem consueta privilegia etiam de beneplacito." What follows is no longer legible. No photograph of S. Angelo or of S. Paolo, the other Benedictine monastery hallowed by association with St. Clare, has, so far as I know, ever been published; those, therefore, here reproduced have a special interest.

106. Namely, to the humble dwelling adjoining the church and situated on a slope below Assisi, about a quarter of a mile from the Porto Nuova. S. Damiano was one

of the three ancient chapels restored by the labors of St. Francis shortly after his conversion. St. Clare tells us in her will that the Saint, while engaged in its restoration, once mounted on a wall of the church and cried out to some poor people of the vicinity: "Come and help me in building the monastery of S. Damiano, for there will yet be ladies there by whose renowned and holy way of life our Heavenly Father will be glorified throughout His Holy Church" (see Test. B. Clarae, l. c., p. 274), and the general lie and appearance of the place must still give to the visitor a very just idea of what S. Damiano was in the early days. Within, the original portions of the monastery are still in their primitive condition; the old refectory of the Saint remains unaltered, save that its low-arched ceiling is brownish black and grimy with age; her little choir, with its worm-eaten stalls, is there too; a winding flight of foot-worn steps leads up to her long, heavily-raftered dormitory, with its dim-lit oratory, and on a tiny terrace adjoining one may see where Clare made a miniature garden. Thanks to the intervention and generosity of the late Lord Ripon, S. Damiano was saved from confiscation by the Italian government and secured to the Seraphic Order. It is now the property of Lord Walter Kerr. The history of the church and monastery has been written by Cristofani: *La Storia della Chiesa e Chiostro di S. Damiano*, Assisi, 1882, 3 Ed., pp. 244. See, also, *Il Santuario di S. Damiano*, Assisi, 1907.

107. See II Cel. VI, § 10, p. 175; Leg. III Soc., C. V., § 13; Bonav. *Leg. Maj.*, C II, § I. See, also, I Cel. IV, § 8 *ff.*, and VIII, § 18. This same crucifix, old even then, and still beautiful, may now be seen at Assisi in the chapel of San Giorgio at Santa Chiara. It was taken thither by the Clares when, in 1260, they moved from S. Damiano into the city.

108. In translating the words "glebas membrorum terit," I have followed the interpretation of the Bollandists.

109. The long, wide Umbrian plain stretching below

Assisi on the one hand down to Spoleto and northwest to Perugia. Clare's horizon was bounded by the mountain ranges of this valley of Spoleto.

110. Pre-eminent among these was the Princess Agnes of Bohemia, who founded a monastery of Clares at Prague in 1236. "If she had left me for a mortal man," exclaimed Frederic II, to whom Agnes had been affianced, "I would have taken vengeance with the sword, but because she prefers the King of Heaven to me I cannot take offense." See *Anal. Franc.*, t. III, p. 183, n. 7.

111. For an account of the spread of the Order throughout Europe during the lifetime of St. Clare, see Wauer, *Entstehung und Ausbreitung des Klarissenordens*, etc., Leipzig, 1906, passim.

112. This was in 1215, or about that year. For the great spiritual crisis in Clare's life, which is here called her "conversion," and from which our author computes the other events he records, occurred in 1212.

113. The Latin here hardly lends itself to a literal translation in our more fastidious language: "Infirmarum sedilia ipsa lavabat, ipsa tergebat suo illo nobili spiritu, nec sordida fugiens nec foetida perhorrescens."

114. What purports to be a copy of this document was published in some editions of the *Firmamentum Trium Ordinum B. Francisci*, a sixteenth-century compilation of *materia seraphica* (notably in the Paris edition of 1512, par. 5, fol. 5 r a and b; it is not contained in the Venetian edition of 1513.) Sbaralea, in his Bullary (t. I, p. 50, note e) throws doubt upon this printed text, and calls attention to the fact that it is without date and has a most unusual ending. In spite of this note of warning, some have continued to regard the text in question as genuine, alleging, as an argument, that Clare alludes to it in her will. (See Sabatier, *Vie*, p. 184, n. i.) But Clare simply declares she asked Innocent III and his successors to confirm her profession of Poverty. She says not a word about his having written it. Here are her words:

"Ad majorem cautelam sollicita fui a Domino Papa Innocentio, sub cujus tempore coepimus, et ab aliis successoribus suis, nostram professionem sanctissimae paupertatis, quam et Patri nostro promisimus, eorum privilegiis facere corroborari." (Test B. Clarae, l. c., p. 277.) Whether or not Innocent III granted Clare's petition in writing or only *viva voce*, through the medium of St. Francis, is not clear. What is certain is that it was confirmed in writing by his successor, Gregory IX. (See note 116.)

115. Gregory IX had ascended the Papal throne in 1227.

116. This memorable interview seems to have taken place in May-June, 1228, when Gregory IX, who had come to Assisi for the preliminaries of the canonization of St. Francis, visited St. Clare at S. Damiano. (See I Cel. II, § 122, p. 131; Wadding, op. cit., ad an. 1228 [t. II, p. 175], n. I.) In September of the same year the Pope yielded and so far gave way to Clare's view as to grant her the unique privilege known as the "Privilegium Paupertatis," by virtue of which she might never be constrained to receive any possessions. The original of this precious document, the first one of its kind ever issued by the Holy See, is preserved in the choir of the Clares at Assisi. I have been permitted to take it out of the glass case that protects it and to photograph it for reproduction here. For the benefit of those who are unfamiliar with the abbreviations it contains, the following copy of the text may be of interest: "Gregorius Episcopus Servus Servorum Dei: Dilectis in Christo filiabus Clarae ac aliis Ancillis Christi in Ecclesia Sancti Damiani Episcopatus Assisi congregatis: Salutem et Apostolicam benedictionem. Sicut manifestum est, cupientis soli Domino dedicari abdicatis rerum temporalium appetitum; propter quod venditis omnibus et pauperibus erogatis nullas omnino possessiones habere proponitis, illius vestigia per omnia inhaerentes qui pro nobis factus est pauper, via, veritas atque vita; nec ab hujusmodi proposito vos rerum terret inopia nam laeva Sponsi coelestis est sub capito vestro ad sustentandum

infirma corporis vestri quae legi mentis ordinata charitate stravistis. Denique qui pascit aves coeli et lilia vestit agri vobis non deerit ad victum pariter et vestitum donec seipsum vobis transiens in aeternitate ministret cum scilicet ejus dextra vos felicius amplexabitur in suae plenitudine visionis. Sicut igitur supplicastis altissimae paupertatis propositum vestrum favore apostolico roboramus auctoritate vobis praesentium indulgentes ut recipere possessiones a nullo compelli possitis. Nulli ergo omnino hominum liceat hanc paginam nostrae concessionis infringere vel ei ausu temerario contraire. Si quis autem hoc attentare praesumpserit indignationem omnipotentis Dei et beatorum Petri et Pauli Apostolorum ejus se noverit incursurum. Datum Perusii XV Kalendas Octobris Pontificatus nostri anno secundo."

117. The questors were lay brothers, whose duty it was to collect bread, oil and other alms, according to the needs of the Sisters. A few Friars Minor, called "Zealots of the Poor Ladies," usually inhabited a small hospice hard by the monasteries of the Clares, a father to attend to their spiritual needs and one or two lay brothers to provide for their material necessities, as in the present instance. (See Appendix, chap. XII of Rule.) This custom still prevails in some monasteries I have visited, like S. Lucia at Foligno, SS. Trinità at Gubbio, where the nuns are now, as in the past, under the jurisdiction of the Friars Minor.

118. An interesting instrument, executed by S. Clare, 8 June, 1238, has preserved for us the names of the fifty-one Sisters forming the community at S. Damiano in that year. It is given by Wadding. See above, note 22.

119. The greater Lent was that from Ash Wednesday to Easter; that of St. Martin's extended, as a rule, from 11 November to Christmas.

120. In this connexion the following inscription, found in the choir at S. Damiano, is not without interest:

Non vox sed votum, non clamor sed amor,
Non cordula sed cor, psallit in aure Dei.

121. The devastation wrought by the imperial troops in the Papal dominions, and especially among the Guelph cities of Umbria, is a matter of history. These so-called Saracens, of whom the army was in part composed, were descendants of the Saracens who at one time dominated Sicily and Calabria. They inhabited certain cities in the Terra di Lavoro, bestowed upon them by Frederick II, which are still designated as Lucerio and Nocera dei Mori or dei Pagani.

122. Remains of a rough sixteenth-century fresco depicting this event may still be seen round a small window at the west end of S. Damiano, now blocked up. Tradition asserts that the troops of Frederick II were forcing an entrance into the monastery by this window when Clare appeared there holding a pyx containing the Blessed Sacrament. It is with reference to this tradition that the Saint is usually depicted in art with this emblem. See Salter, *Franciscan Legends in Italian Art* (London, Dent; New York, Dutton, 1905), pp. 190-91.

123. According to Cristofani (*Storie di Assisi*, cit., pp. 106-107), this event, as well as the one recorded in the preceding chapter, occurred in the year 1244; others refer them both back to 1234. Cristofani's account is based upon a fourteenth-century manuscript in the communal library at Assisi, with marginal notes in the writing of Papini, which I have been able to consult. (No. 341, *Cronica seu liber memorabilium diversarum historiar.*, fol. 117 C.) In virtue of an ancient statute the magistrates of Assisi, the chapter of S. Rufino, with the clergy, confraternities, and citizens were wont to assemble annually on 22 June at the Church of S. Chiara and to proceed thence in procession to S. Damiano, there to assist at a solemn Mass of thanksgiving for the deliverance of the city through the intercession of St. Clare.

124. Wadding, op. cit. an. ad 1253, n. XXIII (t. III, p. 308) and the editors of the *Analecta Franciscana* (t. III (1897), p. 177) deduce that Agnes was born in 1197-98.

She was, therefore, about fifteen years old at the time here referred to.

125. This was on 2 April, 1212, Clare's flight having taken place, as we have seen, on 19 March.

126. Benedict XIV permitted the Franciscan Order to celebrate the feast of St. Agnes of Assisi, and it is kept on 16 November. For a sketch of her life, see "Vita Sororis Agnetis" in *Analect. Francis.*, t. III, pp. 173-182, and *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. I, p. 213.

127. *I. e.*, to the monastery.

128. The text of two of these letters has come down to us. The first appears to have been written about 1219 (see Wadding, op. cit., ad an. 1221, t. II, p. 16, n. xx, and *Analect. Francis.*, t. III, pp. 183 *ff.*), and the second soon after Gregory's accession to the Papacy in 1227. (See Wadding, op. cit., ad an. 1251, t. III, p. 239, n. xvii, and Sbaralea, *Bull.*, t. I, p. 37.)

129. The mystery of the Holy Eucharist held a preponderating place in the life of Clare. Like St. Francis, she had nothing more at heart than all that concerned the cultus of the Blessed Sacrament. And as we see Francis sweeping out poor churches, questing sacred vessels for them and providing them with altar-breads of his own make, so we find Clare, in spite of her infirmities, furnishing them with altar-linens woven by herself.

130. According to the Rule of St. Clare approved just before her death, the Sisters communicated only seven times a year. (See p. 104.) This, of course, is the minimum, and it may well be that St. Clare communicated oftener. But thirteenth-century practice in religious communities in regard to Holy Communion was very different from ours. See Dalgairns, *The Holy Communion* (Dublin, Duffy, 1861), pp. 223 *ff*.

131. As a matter of fact, the Church of St. Francesco is distant about two kilometers, as the crow flies, from S. Damiano, and although one might perhaps be able to hear at S. Damiano the clear rich tones of the bells at S. Fran-

cesco, put up by Elias in 1239, it would be impossible, humanly speaking, for the chant of the Friars and the sound of the organ in the lower church there to reach so far. The incident here recorded is generally referred to Clare's last Christmas on earth, that of 1252.

132. A charming amplified version of this incident is found in the *Actus B. Francisci et Sociorum ejus*, ed. Sabatier (Paris, 1902), chap. 42, and in the *Fioretti di S. Francesco*, c. 35.

133. *I. e.*, the fourth and fifth of the Canonical Hours, corresponding respectively to the sixth hour of the day (noon) and the ninth (3 P. M.).

134. A prayer in honor of the Five Wounds given by certain pious writers on St. Clare as being the one composed by her, must be looked on with suspicion.

135. This is a reference to the Office of the Passion compiled by St. Francis. This office was translated into English for the first time by the present writer, according to the text of the Assisi MS. 338, from which the present Life of St. Clare is likewise translated. See *The Writings of St. Francis* (Philadelphia: The Dolphin Press, 1906), pp. 154-176. For the Latin text, see *Opuscula S. P. Francisci Assisiensis* (Quaracchi, 1904), pp. 126-148.

136. See p. 32.

137. The Latin text, *Hortulana suam secuta plantulam . . . in horto concluso . . . Domino serviebat,* contains a new play upon the name of Clare's mother, as well as an allusion to Cant. 4:12. Wadding, op. cit. ad an. 1253, n. 25 (t. III, p. 309), notes that Ortolana followed her three daughters, Clare, Agnes and Beatrice, into the Order, but says the date of her death is unknown. Jacobilli, however, asserts (*Vite dei Santi e Beati dell' 'Umbria,* t. I [Foligno, 1647], II) that she died 2 January, 1253, and she is commemorated on that day by Arthur (*Martyrologium Franciscanum,* Paris, 1638), who gives her the title of "Blessed." There is a recent biography of this devout woman by P. Ciro Ortolani—*La Beata Ortolana, Madre di*

S. Chiara (Rome, tip. Sallustiana, 1904, pp. XVI-204), but it is not in the main historical.

138. Tradition tells us that she was a niece of St. Clare.

139. This last miracle is written on the margin of the Assisian codex 338 (from which the present translation is made) by another hand from that which wrote the rest of the MS. This other hand, which is apparently that of a contemporary, has also corrected the errors of the copyist here and there, and may have collated the Assisi MS. with an earlier one, perhaps, even with the original autograph biography.

140. *Magna erat in monasterio sororum multitudo languentium*—an allusion to Jo. 5:3

141. *I. e.,* the infirmary, located, then as now, above the refectory at S. Damiano.

142. There is an allusion here to the tree of life of the Apocalypse (22:2), which was a favorite figure with the early Franciscan mystics, as witness the *Lignum Vitae* of St. Bonaventure and the *Arbor Vitae* of Ubertino da Casale.

143. It would seem from a letter of Jacques de Vitry, written in 1216, that the Clares at the outset lived by manual labor, and would not accept alms. (See Boehmer, *Anal. zur Gesch. des Fr. von Assisi,* 1904, p. 94.) After definitive enclosure was imposed upon them about 1219 their needs were supplied by the Friars. See above, p. 27.

144. More probably Andria, in the environs of Perugia, as Papini and Lipsin have noted on the margin of the Assisian MS. We learn from Celano's "First Life" of St. Francis that Philip was one of the eleven original companions of the Saint and a most eloquent preacher. (See I Cel., § 25, p. 28.) He is callel Philip the Long in Glassberger's Chronicle (*Analecta Francis.,* t. II (1887), p. 16), and also in the *Actus B. Francisci,* ed. Sabatier cit., c. I, n. 6, and in the *Chronicle of the XXIV Generals* (in *Anal. Fran.,* t. III, p. 262). In the Bull *Ad Grande Salutis* of Gregory IX, issued 31 January, 1233, he is described as

Visitor of the Poor Ladies; and Jordan in his Chronicle (ed. Boehmer, Paris, 1908, pp. 12-13), calls him the Zealot of the Poor Ladies, and tells us that during Francis's absence in the Orient, Philip obtained from Cardinal Ugolino a Pontifical privilege in favor of the Poor Ladies which the Saint afterward had revoked. According to Wadding, op. cit. ad an. 1259, n. 8 (t. IV, p. 114), Philip died at Perugia in that year and was buried in the church of the Clares there. Others, however, say that he was buried at Assisi.

145. In this connexion it is interesting to recall that Brother Giles, the companion of St. Francis, once visited S. Damiano while an English Friar, a master in theology, thought to have been Alexander of Hales, was preaching there. "Stop, master," he exclaimed, "for I want to preach." The preacher yielded, and, after Giles had finished speaking, was suffered to resume his discourse "to the edification of St. Clare." (See *Anal. Francis.*, t. III, p. 81, and *The Golden Sayings of Bl. Brother Giles*, Philadelphia, 1907, p. xxviii.)

146. By the Bull *Quo Elongati* of 28 September, 1230, Gregory IX had interpreted the words of the Rule of the Friars Minor, Chap. XI, "Quod fratres non ingrediantur monasteria monacharum," as extending also to the monasteries of the Clares. The text of this Bull is given by Sbaralea, op. cit., t. I, pp. 68-70; see, also, *Spec. Perf.*, ed. Sabatier, p. 320 *ff*.

147. *I. e.*, to their Provincial.

148. Innocent IV was at Lyons from December, 1244, to April of 1251. He returned to Italy during the latter year, and after a short sojourn in Genoa took up his seat at Perugia.

149. Cardinal Rainaldo or Reginaldo Conti, then Protector of the Order, afterward Pope under the title of Alexander IV.

150. See p. 96.

151. This interview appears to have taken place on 8 September, 1252. On 16 September he obtained for her the desired confirmation (see Appendix, p. 96).

152. They came 27 April—1 May, 1253, for the consecration of the Basilica of San Francesco.

153. Innocent IV appears to have visited St. Clare twice: first a few days after his arrival in Assisi and again about two days before her death.

154. Early in 1253 Agnes had been called to Assisi by St. Clare from Florence, whither she had been sent by St. Francis about 1219 to be Abbess of the Monastery of Monticello. (See Wadding, op. cit. ad an. 1221, n. xix. t. II, p. 15.)

155. It seems very likely that the passages read to the dying Saint were identical with those which the selfsame Friars twenty-seven years before had read to St. Francis "in commendationem animae," viz., John 13:14. (See Montgomery Carmichael, "The Gospel read to St. Francis 'in transitu,'" in *Dublin Review,* April, 1903, p. 335.)

156. "Would to God that I had a whole forest of such Junipers," St. Francis once exclaimed in regard to this holy brother whose pious pranks are recorded with delightful *naïvité* in the second appendix of the *Fioretti.* He died 4 January, 1254, at Ara Coeli in Rome, where his tomb may still be seen.

157. Mark of Lisbon, who died in 1591, has handed down to us what purports to be the text of this benediction (*Croniche degli Ordini instituti del P. S. Francesco,* Italian trans., Venice, 1582, t. I, l. viii, c. 34), and it has been reproduced in the *Seraph. Legislat. Textus Originales,* cit., p. 281; but its authenticity is not above question. The versions of this Blessing found among the manuscripts of the reform of St. Colette contain some additions, of which that Saint is probably herself the author.

158. Angelo and Leo were two of the famous "Three Companions" of St. Francis, the third being Clare's own cousin, Rufino (see above, n. 81), and together they had

sung for Francis his own "Canticle of the Creatures" when the Saint lay dying. They are both buried at S. Francesco, near their master. Angelo Tancredi of Rieti "was the first knight" to enter the Order, and was "adorned with all courtesy." (*Spec. Perf.*, ed. Sabatier, c. VI, pp. 127 and 167.) Leo, the secretary, confessor and nurse of Francis, was a life-long friend of St. Clare and one of the purest and most sympathetic figures in the Franciscan Legend. He died on 15 November, 1271. (See *Spec. Pref.*, cit., pp. lxxii *ff.*) There is a good sketch of both these Friars with bibliography in Miss Macdonell's *Sons of Francis* (London, Dent, 1902).

159. The Saint died toward dawn on 11 August, 1253, as the late Bishop of Assisi, Mgr. Priori, has been at pains to show in an article, "Del Giorno et dell' Ora della Morte di S. Chiara di Assisi," published in the *Eco di San Francesco*, Sorrento, 1894, t. xii, pp. 781-788.

160. *I. e.*, Syndic or Mayor.

161. The rivalry existing between different towns to obtain possession of the bodies of holy persons was a curious characteristic of medieval Italian piety. The saucy Perugians, as we know, would fain have carried off St. Francis by force when he was in his last illness, so that he might die in their city; they placed a guard about the convent outside Perugia, where Blessed Giles was dying, to make sure of his relics, and later on stole the corpse of Blessed Conrad of Offida away from Bastia. As late as 24 August, 1809, the remains of Blessed Antony of Stronconio were stolen by the Stronconians from S. Damiano, where he had died in 1461.

162. Cardinal Rainaldo, who afterwards, as Alexander III, canonized Clare.

163. The chapel of S. Giorgio stood within the city and with its adjoining hospital belonged to the Canons of S. Rufino. It was here that Francis's preaching had first touched Clare's young heart. His body reposed at S. Giorgio from 5 October, 1226, until its translation to the Basilica

of S. Francesco on 25 May, 1228; not, however, in the church itself, but in a chapel attached to it, which, after the construction of the Monastery of S. Chiara, remained enclosed within the interior cloister, and which may be seen in the photograph facing page 73. (For a description of this chapel, see *Miscellanea Francescana,* Vol. I, fasc. I (2 ed. Foligno, 1901), pp. 45, 46.) It was here, too, that Clare's own remains were placed provisionally on the day following her death, pending the erection in her honor of the splendid Church of S. Chiara. In connexion with this church a new monastery was constructed for the nuns of S. Damiano, so that they might not be separated from the body of such a mother. The ancient Church of S. Giorgio was enclosed within this new monastery, and served as the nuns' choir up to 1900, when it was opened to the public. On 3 October, 1260, the remains of St. Clare were translated with great pomp and buried deep down under the high altar. On 23 September, 1850, after much search had been made, the skeleton of St. Clare was discovered; it is now enshrined in the crypt beneath the Church of S. Chiara.

164. *Paucis interjectis diebus* is the expression used by our author. (See above, p. XXXIII.) In point of fact, ninety-seven days intervened between the death of Clare and that of Agnes. The latter died on 16 November, 1253. See Wadding, op. cit. ad an. 1253, n. xxiii, t. III, p. 308. *Anal. Francis.,* t. III, p. 177. Cristofani, *Storia di S. Damiano,* ed. 1882, p. 97.

165. A town some thirty-six kilometres from Perugia, now known as Umbertide.

166. The Papal Curia, which had returned from France with a suite of courtiers and of pages, mostly French, stayed at Assisi from 12 August to 4 October, 1253, and the present miracle must no doubt be referred to that period.

167. An ancient Roman town ten miles from Assisi, on the road to Foligno.

168. Our codex reads Varni, but this is plainly the slip

of a scribe—a very common thing in medieval MSS.—as a collation of this passage with other early codices goes to show. Narni, the well-known city in question, is some twenty-five kilometers from Spoleto. The Ponte di Augusto, the bridge here referred to, once carried the Via Flaminia toward Rome, and is now one of the most beautiful ruins of its kind in the world. See Hutton, *The Cities of Umbria* (New York, Dutton, 1906), p. 73 *ff*.

169. In the Latin there is a constant play upon Clare's name: *Clare, per claram vidit luminis claritatem Deum laudando clarificat,* etc. In this connexion it is interesting to learn from an eminent Bollandist that in France St. Clare is invoked by the people who suffer from their eyes, because she enables them to see *clearly*. See Delehaye, *The Legends of the Saints,* cit., p. 48.

170. In one of the petty feuds then so common between the rival cities of the Umbrian plain.

171. The practice of offering donaries of wax at the tombs of the Saints, representing the whole body or some part of it, was not uncommon in the Middle Ages.

172. A town under the hills opposite Assisi.

173. A town in the Umbrian plain six kilometres southwest of Assisi.

174. *I. e.,* in Italian *scrofola.*

175. A town in the plain near Assisi.

176. The girl appears to have been combing the hair of the woman, who did not, therefore, see the wolf.

177. The words within brackets are written on the margin of our codex.

178. By the Bull *Gloriosus Deus*, dated 18 October, 1253, scarcely two months after Clare's death, Innocent IV directed the Bishop of Spoleto, Bartholomew Accorombani, to institute an official inquiry as to "the life, conversion, conversation and miracles of St. Clare," with a view to the process of her canonization. The text of this Bull is given by Sbaralea, t. I, p. 684, n. 504. The original is still extant in the archive of S. Chiara at Assisi and is described in

detail in my *Inventarium S. Clarae,* already cited, p. 418. The "Interrogatoria" which accompanied the Bull and according to which the inquiry was to be conducted, are missing, but most probably they were similar to those used in the canonization of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, and which were recently found and edited by Dr. Albert Huyskens in his *Quellen studien zur Geschichte der hl. Elisabeth* (Marburg, 1908), pp. 112 *ff.*

179. As 11 August, the day on which St. Clare died, was the feast of S. Rufino, the Patron of Assisi, her feast was assigned to the day following.

180. The canonization seems to have taken place, as our author states, on 11 August, 1255, the second anniversary of Clare's death. The original Bull of her canonization has not come down to us, and copies of it bearing different dates are to be found. That given by Sbaralea (op. cit., t. II, pp. 81-84) is dated 19 October, 1255. (See, also, Potthast, 16025.) In the Bull which begins *Clara claris praeclara* there is a constant play upon the Saint's name, as in the present biography.

181. See on this question Lemmens, "Die Anfänge des Clarissenordens" in *Römische Quartalschrift,* t. xvi (1902), pp. 93-124.

182. On this point we have the authority not only of St. Clare herself, who has inserted a fragment of this *formula vitae* in the sixth chapter of her Rule (see p. 110), but also of Gregory IX in the Bull *Angelis gaudium* of 11 May, 1238. (See Sbaralea, op. cit., t. I, p. 243.)

183. The Lateran Council of 1215 had prohibited the foundation of new Orders.

184. See Bull *Sancta Romana Ecclesia* of 9 December, 1219, in Sbaralea, op. cit., t. I, p. 3.

185. See the Bull *Sicut manifestum est* of 17 September, 1228, in Sbaralea, op. cit., t. I, p. 771.

186. See his Bull *Cum omnis vera* of 24 May, 1239, in Sbaralea, op. cit., t. I, p. 263.

187. See the Bull *Solet annuere* of 13 November, 1245, in Sbaralea, op. cit., t. I, p. 394.

188. By the Bull *Solet annuere* of 9 August, 1253. See Sbaralea, l. c., t. I, p. 671.

189. See Wadding, *Annales,* ad an. 1252, N. XIX, t. III, p. 287.

190. See on this point *The Writings of St. Francis,* Dolphin Press, Philadelphia, 1906, pp. 75 *ff.*

191. See p. XVIII.

192. See *Arch. Francis. Hist.,* An. I (1908), fasc. II and III, p. 417. I must apologize for referring so frequently to an article of my own, but I know of nothing else dealing so precisely with the document in question.

193. See his brochure *Un Autografo di Innocenso IV e memorie di S. Chiara,* 2 ed., 1895, Rome, Tip. Vatic., § XV, pp. 79-80.

194. See *Histoire abrégée de l'Ordre de Sainte Claire d'Assise,* t. II, Lyons, 1906, p. 119.

195. Published in the *Seraph. Legis. Text. Orig.,* cit. pp. 51-75.

196. The words of the Gospel here referred to are the passages which St. Francis selected for the guidance of his first companions (Matt. 19:21; Mark 6:8; Matt. 16:24) and which he desired them to practise in all their perfection.

197. On the meaning of this passage see Golubovich, "Ceremoniale Ord. Min. Vetustissimum," in *Arch. Francis. Hist.,* an. III, fasc. I (Jan., 1910), pp. 56 *ff.* The Friars Minor recited the Divine Office according to the manner of the Roman Curia.

198. *I. e.,* like the Sisters who cannot read.

199. The text of this chapter has been completely truncated in most Latin editions of the Rule and in the vernacular version based upon them, the two precious fragments of St. Francis's writing herein preserved not appearing at all.

200. *I. e.,* that the benefactors might be commended to the prayers of the community.

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